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LETTERS

R. O. BLECHMAN

'NUREMBERG DOWN THE DRAIN'

The Bronx, NY

■ Jonathan Schell, with his usual perspicacity, analyzes the latest disclosures on the games George W. Bush's lawyers play with the law ["Looking Tough," Nov. 15]. One point, however, requires comment: Their rewriting of international law is not limited to the Geneva Conventions. As Dean Koh of Yale Law School and Professor Stephen Gillers of NYU pointed out at a program called "Torture: Where Were the Lawyers?" at the City Bar Association, the most shocking aspect of those torture-sanctioning memos from the Justice Department was what they didn't say. Not a word about the prohibition of torture in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Torture Convention. Nuremberg down the drain. General Pinochet, who justified each of his repressive policies with a presidential decree, could not have done better than the lawyers in the Office of Legal Counsel of the Department of Justice.

PETER WEISS
Center for Constitutional Rights

SPINNING, LYING, SPINNING, LYING...

Washington, DC

■ Eric Alterman, in his "When Presidents Lie" [Oct. 25], quotes a 1999 essay I wrote with Abram Shulsky ("Leo Strauss and the World of Intelligence"), in which we note that Strauss's teaching about the history of philosophic esotericism "alerts one to the possibility that political life may be closely linked to deception. Indeed, it suggests that deception is the norm in political life, and the hope, to say nothing of the expectation, of establishing a politics that can dispense with it is the exception."

From this, Alterman suggests that we are licensing presidential dissembling. In doing so, he turns the point we were making on its head. As the context makes clear, our complaint is that the intelligence community's analytic work—resting as it does on the foundations of modern social sciences and American political culture—does not take the possibility of other regimes actively engaging in deception as a normal part of their statecraft seriously enough. Indeed, as the essay notes, it is precisely because Americans believe that our politics can dispense with such behavior that we are not sufficiently aware of it in other nations. Maybe if Alterman worried more about the deceptions of states like North Korea and Iran than the so-called lies of President Bush, he would have caught our point.

GARY SCHMITT, *executive director*
Project for the New American Century

ALTERMAN REPLIES

New York City

■ I will accept Gary Schmitt's interpretation of the essay he wrote with Abram Shulsky and offer my apologies. I don't think we have much to learn about his application of it, however. The genuine threats to the United States from Iran and North Korea have been allowed to fester, owing to the focus of so many self-styled Straussian neoconservatives on Iraq, which—despite the Bush Administration's deceptions on this point—presented no significant prewar threat to the United States. This abject policy failure has come to dominate nearly every aspect of our foreign policy—in addition to providing a recruitment tool for anti-American terrorists the world over.

Those of us who had the foresight to oppose this misadventure are in a far stronger position to lecture war supporters about the failure to focus on the threats from Iran and North Korea—rather than vice versa. Finally, on the topic of Strauss himself, I recommend Mark Lilla's recent two-part examination of his work and its influence in *The New York Review of Books*. It is Lilla's contention that US neoconservatives have hijacked the work of a great philosopher to suit their own purposes. It wouldn't be the first time (see my column, "Stop, Thief!" October 16, 2000, at www.thenation.com/doc.mhtml?i=20001016&s=alterman).

ERIC ALTERMAN

NOW YOU TELL US...

Los Angeles

■ As a software professional, I'm terrified by electronic voting, not because the idea is unworkable but because of the way it's currently done. Patrick O'Neil ["Letters," Oct. 25] suggests ways to cheat undetectably, but all of them *can* be detected with proper engineering. If you don't want sneaky code executing only on election day, build a machine that doesn't know the date, or test with the clock always set to election day. Even code that deletes itself can be detected using a checksum, a number derived from the code that changes whenever the code changes. This also insures the accuracy of audits. O'Neil's suggestion of random recounts is certainly a good idea. As for inadvertent bugs, there are techniques (expensive ones) to guarantee the reliability of code. Not widely used, they're indispensable for writing medical software.

In short, any cheating scheme you propose, I can defeat, but only if the software is made public. It would also require extensive testing and highly trained poll workers. As for today's proprietary systems, I trust them about as much as I trust George W. Bush.

MIGUEL MUÑOZ

FLU SHOTS 'ON TARGET'

Madison, Conn.

■ Dr. Marc Siegel's "Vaccine Poker" [Nov. 1] is right on target, as he addresses both the causes and the remedy for the shortage of influenza vaccine. A little historical perspective:

Since the first flu vaccines were shown to be effective in the 1940s, no adequate supply of vaccine has ever been produced to meet the needs of the American public, much less those of other nations. Initially, the toxic effects of the early, inadequately purified vaccines prevented their widespread acceptance by patients or their physicians for what was considered a trivial disease. Years of public education and improvements in vaccine purity have led not only to acceptance of but demand for vaccination. However, the rapid evolutionary rate of the virus to elude human immune response requires the continual readjustment and fabrication of new vaccines on almost an annual basis. As a consequence, supply and demand have fluctuated; manufacturers are not eager to entertain the prospect of fluctuating sales, and most have abandoned their efforts.

As Dr. Siegel points out, an adequate and constant supply of vaccine can be achieved only by assured purchase by the government. This was recognized three decades ago by the National Institutes of Health Advisory Committee on Influenza, which I chaired. Our report stated, "Steps must be taken immediately to insure an adequate and predictable supply of vaccine. *In meeting this goal it is possible that governmental subsidization may be required* (italics mine). Thirty years later, we have a public eager to be immunized. Let's not hang them out to dry.

EDWIN D. KILBOURNE, MD
Emeritus professor of microbiology and immunology, New York Medical College

THEO, CON BRIO, FOR ME-O!

Rochester, NY

■ I hate to sound like some colonial colonel complaining to the *Times*, but since Eric Alterman ["The Liberal Media," Nov. 1] mentions the barbarian king Theodoric as if he were Hagar the Horrible, here is some of what the older *Oxford Classical Dictionary* says about the man: "He received a Roman education and...retained the Roman civil administration in Italy. Himself an Arian, his religious policy was tolerant. He was on friendly terms with the barbarian kingdoms of the West, and confirmed his peaceful policies by a series of matrimonial alliances with the various barbarian royal houses."

"Welcome, Theodoric the Ostrogoth"? We should be so lucky.

MICHAEL STEINBERG

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EDITORIALS

No Victory in Falluja

After a week of fighting, US military commanders have proclaimed victory in the battle for Falluja. Yet with this military success has come an even larger setback for the United States and the Allawi government in Iraq. No sooner had American forces begun to enter Falluja than the insurgency escalated in other cities across central Iraq, and the predictable political backlash within the Sunni community began. As a result, Sunni participation in the elections is more uncertain than it was before the attack, and US forces face an even more hostile population in this region of Iraq and yet another humanitarian crisis.

The purpose of the Falluja campaign was to pacify the strategic Sunni triangle in time for the elections planned for January. By ridding Falluja of foreign fighters and hard-core Saddamists, the Pentagon believed it could blunt the insurgency by denying it a key staging center. It also believed it could help the Allawi government lure disgruntled Sunnis back into the political process. On the basis of what we've seen so far, the campaign has failed on both counts. By the Pentagon's own admission, a large number of the insurgents, including many key leaders, filtered out of Falluja before the battle began. And as US forces concentrated on Falluja, insurgents increased their attacks in other parts of the country. Indeed, insurgents' gains arguably outstripped their temporary loss of Falluja, as they reoccupied the city center of Ramadi, renewed their attack on previously pacified Samarra and left government authority tottering in the key city of Mosul.

The Allawi government's strategy of bringing more Sunnis into the process has been damaged. The initial response of the Sunni leadership was overwhelmingly negative; the most prominent Sunni party threatened to withdraw from the interim government, and leading Sunni clerics called for an election boycott. Public outcry over the Falluja attack may make it difficult for Sunni groups to cooperate with Allawi in the run-up to the elections or to participate in a government over which he presides.

As for the Sunni people, many may not have supported the jihadists among them, but they are unlikely to blame them for the catastrophe inflicted on their city. Many of those Sunnis the Allawi government and the Bush Administration want to draw back into the political process are the same people whose homes have been leveled and families displaced. When the 200,000 residents who fled return to Falluja, they'll find a city in ruins. Indeed, the viciousness of the US assault—exemplified by the videotaped fatal shooting of a wounded man in a mosque by a US Marine—led the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to denounce the killings of civilians and injured people, saying violators of human rights laws "must be brought to justice." One Red Cross official estimates that there have been 800 civilian deaths. Meanwhile, more insurgents have been created, not just in Falluja but also in towns and cities across Iraq, and indeed all across the Arab world.

Such, of course, is the dilemma of being an occupying power fighting a nationalist guerrilla war that has taken on deep religious significance—which is why the invasion of Iraq was a colossal strategic misjudgment from the beginning. But this Administration has continued to compound that mistake by refusing either to withdraw its forces or to give way to an international trusteeship. Faced with the prospect of defeat, the Administration has done in Falluja what it knows best: Escalate military action with no regard for the consequences—either for Iraqis or for our long-term position in the Arab and the Islamic world.

The Administration has also, predictably, tried to shift the blame for the worsening outlook for elections to the United Nations. American officials have suggested that UN Secretary Gen-

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EDITORIALS

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eral Kofi Annan was being obstructionist with his letter warning that an assault on Falluja would further alienate the Iraqi people and with his unwillingness to commit more UN electoral workers to Iraq. But the White House has no grounds to complain: Despite the dangerous security situation in Iraq, the UN, according to the *New York Times*, has "succeeded in training 6,000 election registrars and opening up hundreds of registration places across the country." Indeed, because of the UN's heroic efforts, voter registration reportedly is proceeding ahead of schedule—or was, until the Falluja offensive.

One would have hoped that the mess in Iraq would make the Administration more open to reason and international advice. But the replacement of Secretary of State Colin Powell with Bush's loyal National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, along with the speculation that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is staying on, suggests that the Administration is committed to its hard ideological position on Iraq. Thus, we must conclude that the destruction of Falluja is just the beginning of the next phase of a long and costly tragedy for us and the Iraqi people—and that only an active antiwar opposition that builds the broadest possible coalition, one capable of exerting concerted pressure on Congress and the White House, can bring this tragedy to a close.

COMMENT

Questions for Rice

"Dr. Rice, nice to see you again. Congratulations on your appointment. We Democrats on the committee are certainly in no position to block your nomination. In any event, you are the perfect choice to represent this President overseas. After all, you've been involved in all his foreign policy blunders during the past four years. So I'd like to use the little time I get to ask a few questions. Let's see if we can clear up some things for the record.

"First, why did the President say before the war there were 'stockpiles' of biological weapons in Iraq? Where did he get that from? Even the overstated National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq said only—and this was an exaggeration—that Iraq had research programs in this area. Oh, yes, I forgot, the White House said that neither you nor the President read the NIE before deciding to launch the war. Why was that? As you might have read in the papers, the NIE did contain opinions of analysts who disagreed with the conclusion that Iraq was loaded with WMDs. Were you and the President not interested in these views? And while we're at it, after the invasion you said, 'The President took the nation to war to depose a bloody tyrant who was building a weapons of mass destruction program and had weapons of mass destruction.' The Duelfer report tells us Saddam Hussein had no weapons and no active WMD programs. So, then, did the President take us to war for invalid reasons?

"You've also said, 'We do know that [Saddam] is actively pursuing nuclear weapons.' The Duelfer report and international nuclear inspectors tell us he was not. So why did you say that? And referring to that controversial line in the State of the Union address

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when the President claimed Iraq was seeking uranium in Africa, you said, 'Had there been even a peep that the [CIA] did not want that sentence in...it would have been gone.' Given that the CIA did raise questions about this allegation, how do you explain your explanation? Also, the President said before the war that Saddam was a threat because he was 'dealing' with Al Qaeda. Yet the CIA and 9/11 commission said there was no evidence of an operational relationship between the two. Did the President know something the CIA and the 9/11 commission did not?

"Moving right along, can you tell us why there were no high-level Administration discussions regarding post-invasion Iraq? Why no adequate planning for the necessary economic, political, social, legal and security transitions? Wouldn't it have been your job to organize such discussions? And as the 9/11 commission noted, Richard Clarke repeatedly warned you before 9/11 that Al Qaeda seemed about to attack, and various intelligence reports said the same. Why did you do little or nothing in response?

"I could go on for hours, but let me finish with this: Do you think it is possible—just possible—that the Iraq war was a mistake? Is it worth thousands of more lives and hundreds of billions of dollars more, no matter what?

"Thank you. Take as much time as you need to answer all these questions."

DAVID CORN

Gonzales: Wrong Choice

Cabinet nominees are not known for going out on a limb. So when White House counsel Alberto Gonzales intoned at the press conference announcing his nomination to be Attorney General that "the American people expect and deserve a Department of Justice guided by the rule of law," observers could be forgiven for suppressing a yawn. Except that in this day and age, a Justice Department guided by the rule of law is a positively revolutionary concept. Under the leadership of John Ashcroft, the department has spent the past three years treating the rule of law as at best an inconvenient obstacle, at worst a source of nitpicking that "only aids terrorists."

So, restoring the rule of law to the halls of Justice would be a great idea. But is Alberto Gonzales really the man to do it? A review of his record suggests that he has not shown any particular fealty to the rule of law, and has, in fact, been at the forefront of Administration efforts to subvert it.

Start with the fact that in the internal Administration debates over how to try terrorists—which as White House counsel he coordinated—Gonzales makes Ashcroft look like a voice of reason. According to a detailed behind-the-scenes account by Tim Golden for the *New York Times*, Ashcroft advocated trying terrorists in the criminal justice system and warned that the procedures for military tribunals would be seen as "draconian." Gonzales sided with the extremists. He urged military tribunals, disfavored any civilian participation and even opposed giving defendants a presumption of innocence. Those views prompted objections within the Administration, from military and State Department lawyers, Secretary of State Colin Powell, even National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. Gonzales's response? He reportedly kept them out of the loop, leaving the real decision-making to an inner core of Federalist Society conservatives.

In January 2002 Gonzales wrote a memo to the President arguing that Geneva Convention protections should not extend to the prisoners at Guantánamo. Gonzales wrote that in the war on terror, the Geneva Conventions are "obsolete" and "quaint" and would impede the interrogation of enemy combatants. It is only a few short steps down the slippery slope from that view to the torture US agents have inflicted on detainees in Iraq, Guantánamo and elsewhere.

One giant step down that slope may have been the infamous "torture memo" of August 1, 2002. Gonzales didn't write this one—it was drafted by the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel—but he's the only person on the "To" line, which means he must have requested it. Its clear intent is to evade the mandates of federal criminal law and international treaties banning torture. According to the memo, detainees may be threatened with death, as long as it's not imminent death, and may be subjected to physical pain, as long as it's less than that which accompanies "serious physical injury, such as organ failure." Perhaps most troubling, it argues that the President cannot be bound by laws forbidding torture, because that would "violate the Constitution's sole vesting of the commander-in-chief authority" in him.

When the torture memo was leaked in the summer of 2004, in the wake of the Abu Ghraib scandal, Gonzales denounced it as "irrelevant and unnecessary." But why didn't Gonzales do so when he first received the memo nearly two years earlier? Why did it find its way almost verbatim into a Pentagon memo on interrogations six months later? And why did he request the memo in the first place? Until these questions are answered, the rule of law will not be restored.

The reasons to question Gonzales's commitment to the rule of law do not stop at his role in combating terror. Gonzales previously served as counsel to then-Governor Bush in Texas, and in that capacity had the unenviable task of advising the governor on whether to exercise his pardon power with respect to upcoming executions. During his tenure, Gonzales wrote memos and briefed the governor on fifty-seven executions. In every case, Bush let the execution go forward. Alan Berlow obtained and reviewed Gonzales's memos, which served as the basis for Bush's decisions, and wrote for *The Atlantic Monthly* that they "repeatedly failed to apprise the governor of crucial issues in the cases at hand: ineffective counsel, conflict of interest, mitigating evidence, even actual evidence of innocence." No decision is more important than whether to put a person to death (although whether to torture him surely comes close), yet Gonzales's memos consistently left out the best arguments for favoring life. Much as he did during the formulation of the tribunal policy, Gonzales screened out dissenting views.

An unknown (and, we hope, small) number of copies of the November 29 issue contained several blank pages. If your issue was one of them, please call *The Nation*'s subscriber services (800-333-8536) and they'll send a replacement.

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COMMENT

Senator Charles Schumer has said that Gonzales is "a better candidate than John Ashcroft." But that's a pretty low standard. Wouldn't it be better to take Gonzales at his word, and ask whether he can restore the rule of law? Nowhere has that value suffered more than in the Administration's policies on the detention, interrogation and torture of prisoners of war. How is a man who made Ashcroft appear moderate on those issues going to restore what Ashcroft has torn asunder? DAVID COLE

David Cole (cole@law.georgetown.edu), legal affairs correspondent for The Nation, *is the author of* Enemy Aliens: Double Standards and Constitutional Freedoms in the War on Terrorism.

Our Moral Values

We are the 55 million progressives who came together in this election, voted for Kerry and rejected the Bush agenda.

We came together because of our moral values: *care and responsibility, fairness and equality, freedom and courage, fulfillment in life, opportunity and community, cooperation and trust, honesty and openness*. We united behind political principles: equality, equity (if you work for a living, you should earn a living) and government for the people—all the people.

These are traditional American values and principles, what we are proudest of in this country. The Democrats' failure was a failure to put forth our moral vision, celebrate our values and principles, and shout them out loud.

We must immediately convince our leaders to unite behind these values, express our common moral vision and hold the line against the Bush agenda because it is immoral! Bush will call them obstructionists. They must frame themselves as heading in the right direction, going forward not backward, defending the greatest of American ideals and moral principles, working against a radical right agenda that would lead our country to disaster and speaking for more than 55 million highly moral, patriotic Americans.

If we communicate our values clearly, most people will recognize them as their own, personally more authentic and more deeply American than those put forth by conservatives. At the very least they will see progressives as having deeply held, traditional American principles. This would be a huge step forward from the present state, in which conservatives are seen as having a monopoly on "values" and progressives are framed as the party of "if it feels good, do it," with no higher principles.

Moral values at the national level are idealized family values projected onto the nation. Progressive values are the values of a responsible nurturant family, where parents (if there are two) are equally responsible. Their job is to nurture their children and raise them to be nurturers of others. Nurturance has two aspects: empathy and responsibility—both for yourself and your children. From this, all progressive values follow, both in the family and in politics.

If you empathize with your children, you will want them to have *strong protection, fair and equal treatment and fulfillment in life.* Fulfillment requires *freedom,* freedom requires *opportunity* and opportunity requires *prosperity.* Since your family lives in, and requires, a community, *community building* and *community service* are required. Community requires *cooperation*, which requires *trust*, which requires *honesty* and *open communication*. Those are the progressive values—in politics as well as family life.

Take protection. In addition to physical protection, there is environmental protection, worker protection and consumer protection, as well as all the "safety nets"—Social Security, Medicare and so on. Equality means full political and social equality, without regard to wealth, race, religion or gender. Openness requires open government and a free, inquiring press. Progressive political ideals are nurturant moral ideals.

On the other hand, the strict-father family model assumes that evil and danger will always lurk in the world, that life is difficult, that there will always be winners and losers and that children are born bad—they want to do what feels good, not what's right—and have to be made good. A strict father is needed to protect and support the family and to teach his kids right from wrong. That can be done in only one way: punishment painful enough that, to avoid it, children will learn the internal discipline necessary to be moral. That discipline can also make them prosperous if they seek their self-interest and no one interferes. Mommy isn't strong enough to protect the family and is too soft-hearted to discipline the children. That's why fathers are necessary.

Apply this, via metaphor, to the nation: We need a strong President who knows right from wrong to defend the nation. Social programs are immoral because they give people things they haven't earned and so make them undisciplined—both dependent and less able to function morally. The prosperous people are the good people. Those who are not prosperous deserve their poverty. Taxes take away the rightful rewards of the prosperous. Wrongdoers should be punished severely. Government should get out of the way of disciplined (hence good) people seeking their self-interest. The President is to be obeyed; since he knows right from

(Continued on Page 27)

CALVIN TRILLIN

ON THE APPOINTMENT OF ALBERTO GONZALES AS ATTORNEY GENERAL

The AG's to be one Alberto Gonzales—
Dependable, actually loyal *über alles*.
Though we can't say "Viva!"
For him on Geneva
(Conventions he'd treat
As quite obsolete)
The fact he's not Ashcroft does bring us some
solace.

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JONATHAN SCHELL

What Happened to Hearts?

For some time now, American political discussion has seemed to revolve around little stock phrases, such as "defining moment" (at the time of the first Gulf War), "the end of history" (at the end of the cold war), "the economy, stupid" (in the early Clinton years), "shock and awe" (as the second Gulf War began). Sometimes there's a revival of one or another. One of these is "winning hearts and minds." It became popular during the Vietnam War and is enjoying a vogue in the context of the war in Iraq.

However, the phrase has undergone an interesting evolution. This is reflected in two recent columns, one by Jim Hoagland in the *Washington Post*, the other by Mark Bowden in the *Los Angeles Times*. You might suppose that any reflection on hearts and minds would revolve around the elections that are planned for January in Iraq. How, someone might ask, can the United States, now hugely disliked in Iraq, make itself so appealing that Iraqis would vote for a government cut to our specifications? Yet the principal occasion for the two writers' reflections is instead the military campaign—specifically, the Marines' assault on Falluja.

Back in the days of Vietnam, the phrase acquired a definite meaning: In a war of pacification, winning battles was not enough; you also had to win the population's hearts and minds. If you did not, each victory in battle would only be the prelude to further battles, and at the end, when you left, all your work would be washed away by the contrary will of the local people, as happened in Vietnam. It was possible to rule by the sword, as empires have done through the ages, but then you had to be ready to occupy the country indefinitely. Winning hearts and minds, therefore, was not a frill of policy but its foundation, the sine qua non of victory.

In his discussion of the invasion of Falluja, Hoagland begins with a seeming acknowledgment of the Vietnam lesson. He recognizes that the measurements of success cannot merely be the "numbers of insurgents killed or captured, or bomb factories seized or obliterated." For "as Americans learned to their grief in Vietnam," such measurements are "elusive and illusory." We expect to hear at this point that winning hearts and minds is necessary, and Hoagland does not disappoint. But he introduces a variant of the old phrase. Falluja, he says "is part of a battle for minds rather than 'hearts and minds.'" (The title of the article is "Fighting for Minds in Fallujah.") What can he mean? What happened to hearts? The answer is that the "immediate objective is to dissuade Sunni townspeople from joining, supporting or tolerating the insurrection," and "the price they will pay for doing so is being illustrated graphically in the streets of Fallujah." This isn't a lesson for the heart—the organ of love, enthusiasm, positive approval. The reaction of the heart—whether Iraqi or American—could only be pity, disgust and indignation. Thus, only the "minds" of "the townspeople" could draw the necessary conclusions, as they survey the corpse-strewn wreckage of their city. In short, the people of Iraq will be stricken with fear, or, to use another word that's very popular these days, terror. Then they'll be ready to vote.

Bowden takes up the same theme. "Guerrilla war is always about hearts and minds," he notes. He acknowledges that most of the guerrillas would have escaped in the long buildup to the attack. Still, he argues, the attack was important. True, it will not influence the "boldest" souls, who are motivated by "nationalism, religion, kinship or ideology." (All these things were applauded in the recent American election, but they apparently are to have no place in the life of Iraqis.) But "ordinary people" can still be won over. How? He arrives at the same conclusion as Hoagland. "I suspect fear has more to do with influencing them than anything else." Most Iraqis, "like sensible people everywhere, are looking to see which side is most likely to prevail." The stake for them is "survival"—depending on which side is more likely to kill them. Bowden wants it to be the United States. The payoff is not any concrete achievement of the attack; it is the spectacle of the subjugated city, which "works as a demonstration of will and power."

Certainly, the assault on Falluja has given the Iraqi people a lot to look at, and a lot to think about. Some 200,000 people—the great majority of Falluja's population of some 300,000—were driven out of their city by news of the imminent attack and the US bombardment. No agency of government, US or Iraqi, which turned off the city's water and electricity in preparation for the assault, offered assistance. Nor did the United Nations Refugee Agency or any other representative of the international community appear. And where are the people now? And what stories are the expelled 200,000 telling the millions of Iraqis among whom they are now mixing? We don't know. No one seems to be interested.

When the attack came, the first target was Falluja General Hospital. The *New York Times* explained why: "The offensive also shut down what officers said was a propaganda weapon for the militants: Falluja General Hospital, with its stream of reports of civilian casualties." If there were no hospital, there would be no visible casualties; if there were no visible casualties, there would be no international outrage, and all would be well. What of those civilians who remained? No men of military age were permitted to leave during the attack. Remaining civilians were trapped in their apartments with no electricity or water. No one knows how many of them have been killed, and no official group has any plans to find out. The city itself is a ruin. "A drive through the city revealed a picture of utter destruction," the *Independent* of Britain reports, "with concrete houses flattened, mosques in ruins, telegraph poles down, power and phone lines hanging slack and rubble and human remains littering the empty streets."

Both columnists do mention the elections. Bowden says the best hope for Iraq is "for elections to take place," and Hoagland believes the attack on Falluja will "clear the way" for them. Ballot boxes are to spring up in the tracks of the tanks. Some commentators even refer to "the Sunni heartland." (As far as I can tell, no one has yet asked how Iraqi "security moms" will vote.) Meanwhile, the insurgency, failing so far to learn its lesson, has opened fronts in other cities, which may soon get the same treatment as Falluja. "They made a wasteland and called it peace," Tacitus famously said. It was left to the United States, champion of freedom, to update the formula: They made a wasteland and called it democracy.

Jonathan Schell is the Harold Willens Peace Fellow at The Nation Institute.

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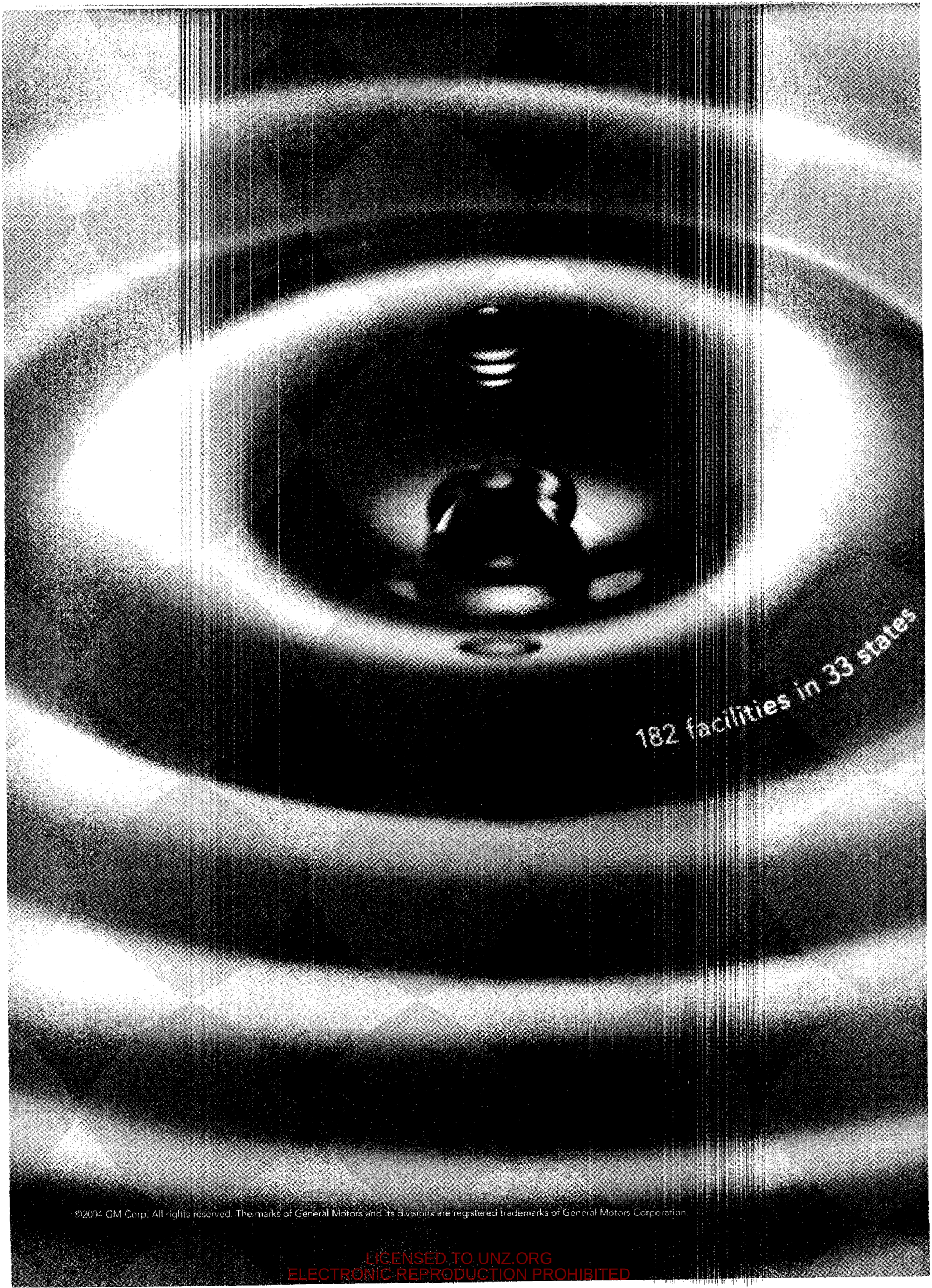

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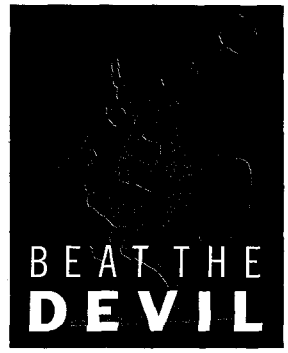
ALEXANDER COCKBURN

The Poisoned Chalice



At least when Duffy's Circus left Youghal there'd be piles of dung from the elephant and the horses. The Kerry campaign leaves nothing of fertilizing potential, not a single creative idea, only grim advisories like not running any nominee from the Northeast in 2008, and we all know the probable life span of that piece of useful advice.

How quickly the caravan moves on! The Brookings crowd sadly pull their résumés from the fax machines. John Kerry resumes his ghostlike sojourn in the Senate, where he might apply himself to improving his attendance record, the worst in the upper chamber. He missed no less than 76 percent of the Senate Intelligence Committee's public hearings over the course of his eight-year tenure on that committee. Teresa returns to full-time work at the Heinz Foundation, dispensing money to neoliberal environmental groups, though, alas, she has had to dispense with the wise counsel of Ken Lay, formerly of Enron, who adorned her board of advisers until last year.

Pockets of Kerrycrats fight on, like Japanese soldiers on atolls in the Pacific. No doubt there are 527s out there, still nourishing themselves on the money of men like Soros. There's even been some talk about Kerry keeping his hat in the presidential ring, but we shouldn't take that too seriously. Over the next few months his horselike visage will fade in the murk of memory.

The political consultants pocket their retainer fees, their 10 or 15 percent commissions on hundreds of millions' worth of campaign ads, and march on to the next electoral rendezvous. Before the election a profile of Kerry's manager, Bob Shrum, disclosed that he stood to make $5 million out of the 2004 presidential campaign, win or lose.

The truly bad news is that the 9/11 nuts have relocated to Stolen Election. My inbox is awash with their ravings. People who have spent the past three years sending me screeds establishing to their own satisfaction that George Bush personally ordered the attacks on the twin towers and that Dick Cheney vectored the planes in are now pummeling me with data on the time people spent in line waiting to vote in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, and how the Diebold machines are all jimmied. As usual, the conspiracy nuts think plans of inconceivable complexity worked at 100 percent efficiency, that Murphy's law was once again in suspense and that 10,000 co-conspirators are all going to keep their mouths shut.

Here's what my colleague at *The Nation* Justin Taylor tells me, re the much-ballyhooed youth vote: The consensus now seems to be that the youth vote spiked upward about 9 percent, a considerable lift from one election to another. But voter turnout as a whole went up by about the same proportion, so while youth did get more involved, they did not get more involved than anyone else. "With regard to John Kerry and the youth vote," Justin advises me, "there is good reason to believe that while the young were probably more likely to go blue this time, there is a rapidly expanding Republican Youth faction that likely voted in more consistent—if not larger—numbers than the Kerry crowd. Forget business school bluebloods, and think of those order-by-phone ads you see for Christian-rock double albums on cable channels—all those dead-eyed white kids with the slow sway and the vague smiles; these are the wing nuts of the next generation, and they are largely of age or coming of age to make their vote felt."

The months will pass and then, most hideous of hideous thoughts, we'll have to put up with three solid years of talk about Hillary Clinton. With her in the White House and Bill at the UN, there'll be nowhere left to run.

Those who argued that Bush's re-election would, by and large, do more to sap the American Empire already detect pleasing omens of enhanced discord among the allies. Out goes the oiler of troubled waters, Colin Powell. In comes fractious Condoleezza. Would you really have preferred Holbrooke, shuttling between Paris, Bonn and Madrid amid relieved shouts that here, after four dark years, was a man who respected Euro-feelings?

And talking of the euro, down down down goes the US dollar against all the major world currencies. Soon we'll be getting news footage of US tourists pushing airport trolleys piled high with worthless greenbacks along the rue St-Honoré and into the Ritz to settle their bills before camping out under the bridges. In the past two years the US dollar has declined 52 percent against the euro, which many people used to think had about the same substantive brawn as a UN blue helmet.

Here's a sign of how bad things are. Speaking honestly, can you remember the name of the Treasury Secretary? Aha! It's... John Snow. Now, in the old days everyone knew the name of the Treasury Secretary, the guy who protected the money and strutted the ramparts of Fort Knox. Not anymore. These days he's a harrowed mendicant who spends most of his day on the line to Beijing, imploring the Chinese not to join up with the Japanese in ditching the dollar as a global unit of account, heeding Jude Wanniski's thought that they could join up to fix the yuan and yen to gold in an Asian Bretton Woods.

The neocons? They're holding on, probably aware that if they quit government they'll live like hunted things, fleeing lawsuits down the years. They'll cling on and then hope Bush will pardon them on his way out of Dodge in 2008, same as his dad did Weinberger and his CIA buddies.

Falluja has now supposedly been "won." For how long? Sometimes the parallels drawn between Iraq and Vietnam have seemed a bit theatrical. Not anymore. No hearts and minds have been won in Falluja any more than they were won in the Vietnamese countryside around My Lai. The city has been destroyed in order to save it for democracy. The language of the US military commanders, and of the journalists who relay their press releases, echoes with eerie and horrible fidelity those press releases from US military HQ in Saigon thirty-five years ago. LBJ handed the quagmire on to Nixon. It's Bush's poisoned chalice, bestowed by his first to his second term, the cup he'll be hoisting on Inauguration Day. ■

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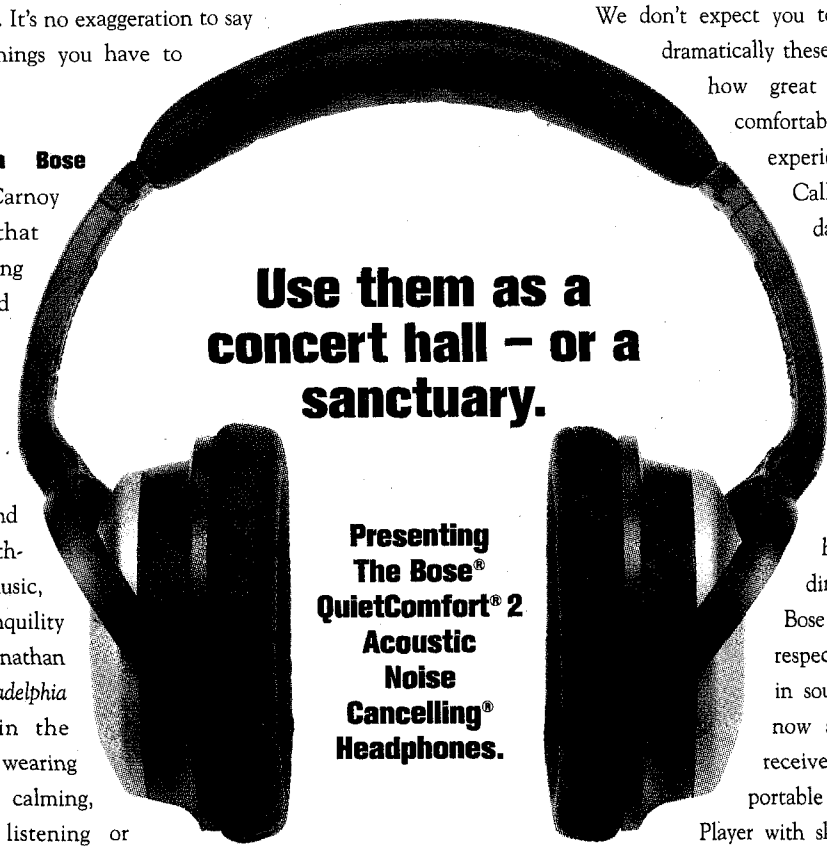

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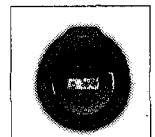

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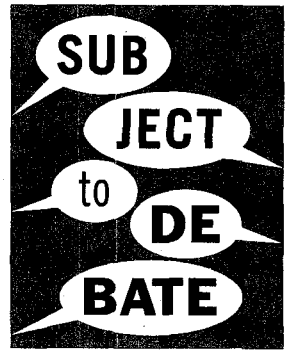
KATHA POLLITT

Earthly Rewards for the Christian Voter



Sitting alone in a classroom at a Catholic all-boys high school this weekend (don't ask), I passed the time by browsing through the health textbooks stacked on the window sill. Sure enough: no discussion of contraception (condoms are mentioned, but not described, in connection with people who have HIV); abortion, still legal here in the United States, isn't even listed in the glossary. Sex itself is discussed only in the vaguest terms, with emphasis on how to avoid it. This wasn't a special Catholic-boy textbook, either—*Health: Skills for Wellness* is one of the bestselling health texts in the country.

Think about that when you read that "moral values" voters will get no payback for helping Bush to victory. Tom Frank, whose much-discussed *What's the Matter With Kansas?* is a colorful guide to the wing nuts of the Sunflower State, is the chief exponent of this view. Year after year, says Frank, working-class voters fall for fire-breathing crusaders who promise to crack down on abortion, gay rights, porn, Darwin and so on, but once in office all they do is cut the taxes of rich people and shovel favors to corporations. Not only do these right-wing radicals vote against their own economic interests, Frank argues, they're suckers, too.

Has the Christian right really so little to show for its self-sacrifice? "John Kerry's defeat notwithstanding," Frank Rich argued in his *New York Times* column recently, "it's blue America, not red, that is inexorably winning the culture war, and by a landslide." So you might think if you watch a lot of TV, where, as Rich often points out, hedonism, vulgarity and excess flourish more lavishly with each passing season—and nowhere more so than on Fox, the right's own network. It's probably true that when humongous amounts of corporate money unite with the national longing for wardrobe malfunctions of every kind, the mores of small-town Kansas don't stand much of a chance.

It may also be true that the radical right will never achieve its stated legal goals—the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, passage of the Human Life Amendment, a constitutional amendment forbidding gay marriage, the reinstatement of prayer and Bible reading in the schools—much less such dystopian dreams as making Christianity the national religion, abolishing public schools and banning the Pill and divorce. But that's like saying the left got nothing from FDR because it didn't get socialism. The fact is, anyone who thinks the GOP is stiffing its "moral values" backers hasn't been paying attention: George Bush, for one, has been paying them back for the past four years. He's promoted a raft of anti-choice legislation—including the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban, the Unborn Victims of Violence Act and a law making it easier for health professionals to deny women abortions and even birth control for "reasons of conscience." He's packed the federal bench with anti-choice reactionaries, and he's seeded the federal bureaucracy and the government's international agencies with hard-line social conservatives like the faith-healing Dr. W. David Hager of the FDA reproductive health panel. These people wield immense power over regulations and funding and the flow of information. It did not take a Senate majority to keep emergency contraception from being sold over the counter; all it took was compliant Mark McClellan, willing to overlook the recommendation of his own expert panel and the overwhelming weight of medical opinion.

Bush has flat-funded Title X, which pays for birth control for poor women, while heaping federal dollars on abstinence-until-marriage programs, $138 million in fiscal 2004 and a requested $272 million for the next year. He's appointed delegates to UN conferences who have done their best to wreck global consensus on reproductive health, the rights of women and children, and AIDS. Fully one-third of the $15 billion budget for his international AIDS initiative goes to abstinence-only programs, cutting out established workers in the field in favor of Christian groups with zero experience. Even though his faith-based initiative tanked, Christian entrepreneurs—pastors, counselors, creators of "educational" materials, inspirational speakers, anti-sex impresarios—have gotten loads of federal money, with more to come. As a bonus, if you visit the Parks Department gift shop at the Grand Canyon, you can now buy *Grand Canyon: A Different View*, a creationist volume that claims that the earth couldn't possibly be more than a few thousand years old.

The cultural right may eventually find itself stymied at the federal level—although it may also luck out with Bush's upcoming Supreme Court appointments, and with such Talibanesque new senators as Tom Coburn, who wants to execute abortion providers, and Jim De Mint, who doesn't want gays or unmarried mothers teaching school. Most of government happens in the states, though, and in some the right is doing quite well. Eleven states passed gay-marriage bans. Four states—Georgia, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin—are poised to require that evolution be taught as an unproven hypothesis, with Kansas, where creationists just won back control of the school board, probably to follow. Florida is the proud home of a faith-based prison. In Mississippi, women who want abortions must be told, falsely, that there's a link between abortion and breast cancer. In Texas, due to a little-noted regulatory change reported in this space last spring, there is now exactly one clinic where a woman can get an abortion after sixteen weeks. I could go on and on. Some of these victories for the radical right may seem minor, or bizarre, or symbolic, but they add up.

I too believe that in the long run equality and tolerance and liberal sexual mores will win out over repressive Christian "moral values." After all, civil union, which no one had even heard of a few years ago, is now supported by two-thirds of the population. But before the tables turn on the Christian right, how many biology classes will be clouded with creationist nonsense? How many young people will suffer STDs and HIV and pregnancy because they learned in school that condoms "don't work"—or didn't hear about them at all? How many women will carry disastrous pregnancies to term? It's not much comfort that Pat Robertson can't ban *Trading Spouses*. ■

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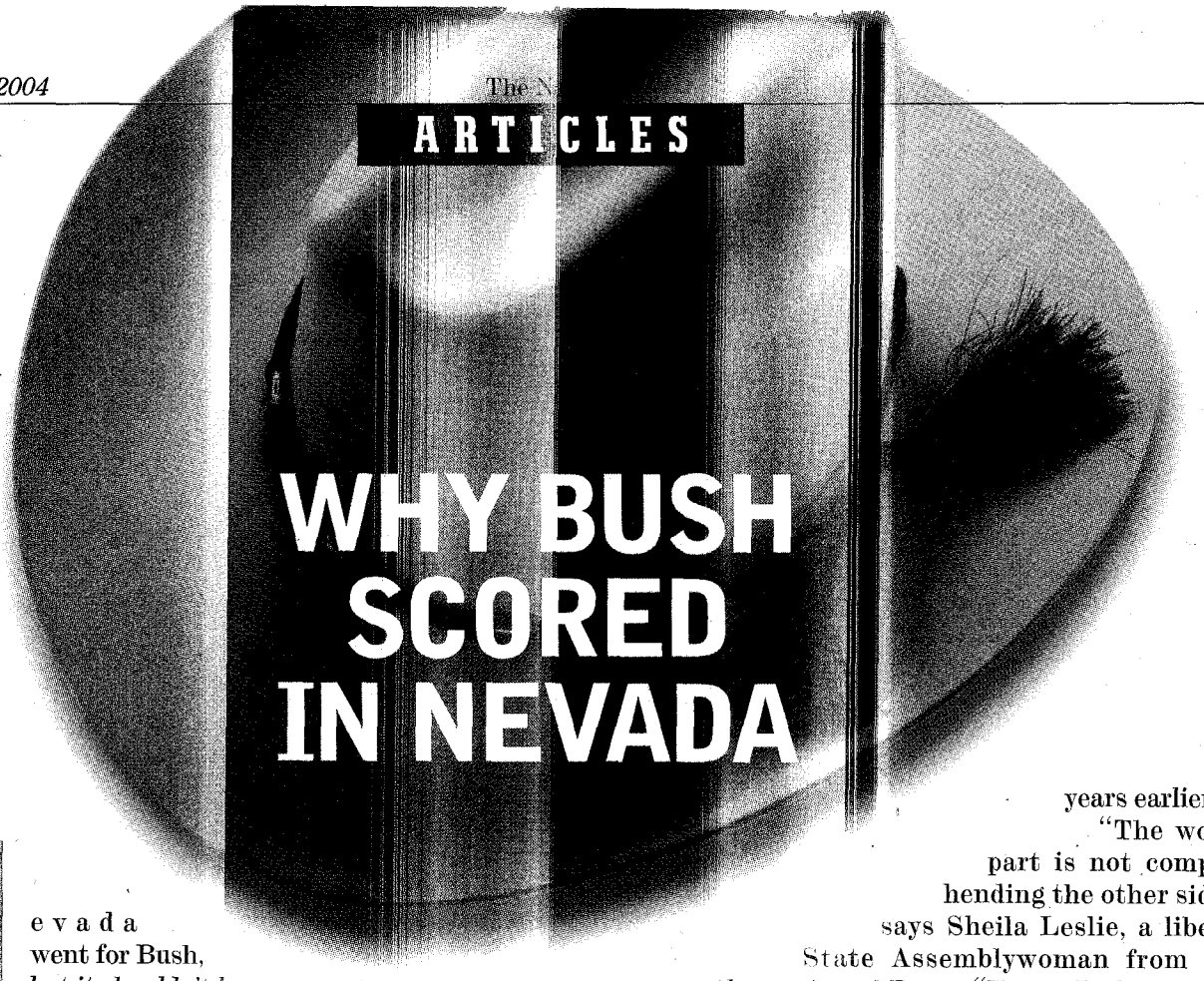

WHY BUSH SCORED IN NEVADA

by SASHA ABRAMSKY

Nevada went for Bush, but it shouldn't have.

No, I don't mean that its voting machines were rigged, or that Republicans engaged in widespread voter intimidation. What I mean is that on most big-ticket issues—on the sorts of issues that, historically, elections turn on—most Nevadans disagreed more with the national Republican Party than they did with the Democrats. On what is arguably the single biggest issue facing the state, the opening of a vast nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain, a statewide survey conducted by the Office of the Governor's Agency for Nuclear Projects in the run-up to the election showed that 77 percent were opposed to the project, which is supported by Bush but opposed by Kerry. Knocking on doors, canvassers also found strong unease about the direction of the war in Iraq, the state of the economy and job security—the critical "Are you better off today than you were four years ago?" litmus test posited by no less a conservative icon than Ronald Reagan. They also expressed concern about Bush's water distribution policies in the arid West, about recent judicial rulings encroaching on Native American tribal sovereignty—a big issue in Nevada—about Bush's proposals on Social Security, the lack of affordable healthcare, the price of gasoline and so on.

Yet on election day, George W. Bush won Nevada by 21,567 votes—mirroring the nation, the split was 51 percent to 48 percent. This was just slightly slimmer than the 21,597 edge Bush enjoyed four years earlier.

"The worst part is not comprehending the other side," says Sheila Leslie, a liberal State Assemblywoman from the northern city of Reno. "I've talked to many, many people who voted for that man, and I still don't understand it. They agree he's wrong on Iraq, tax cuts, the environment, and they still voted for him. The tipping point, they can't seem to articulate. They didn't line up the policies of the President with their own personal views, because if they'd done so they would have voted for John Kerry. It was a gut vote, not an intellectual one. It makes no sense. It wasn't a rational vote."

Indeed, many Nevadans who voted for Bush turned around and supported Democrats in other races. Sheila Leslie's share of the vote went from 53 percent in 2002 to 63 percent this time around. In the Washoe County area, of which Reno makes up the major part, Democrats picked up two State Assembly seats, helping to insure that the State Assembly stayed in Democratic hands and balancing a Republican State Senate and a moderate Republican governor (who used to be a Democrat), Kenny Guinn. Democrat Harry Reid—soon to become Nevada's first Senate minority leader—was comfortably re-elected (though Reid made sure to ally himself with the gun lobby and the mining interests, and appealed to culturally conservative Bush voters with his anti-choice stand). And a state minimum-wage initiative passed overwhelmingly. Moreover, legislators who had supported Governor Guinn's move to raise $900 million in taxes in 2003 as an emergency measure to keep the state's schools open were mostly re-elected—despite harsh campaigns against them by

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right-wing Republicans and conservative media outlets.

Strategists on both sides point to cultural issues as a crucial factor in Kerry's defeat. "The economy, taxes, healthcare, that was lower down the list," says Earlene Forsythe, chair of the Nevada GOP and a longtime Washoe County resident. "The number-one issue was morals." Number two, according to Forsythe, was terrorism. AP exit poll data actually suggested a slightly more complex scenario: Fully one-quarter of voters said terrorism was their number-one concern, and 88 percent of these voters supported Bush. Number two was Iraq—and the voters who cited that as their top issue broke solidly for Kerry. But number three, beating out the economy and taxes, was morals, and three-quarters of those voters chose Bush. Forsythe says the Republicans identified and targeted two key new-voter blocs in Nevada: the "moral moms" and the "security moms." "They felt safer with Homeland Security with Bush at the head," Forsythe explains. "He promised to bring it to the terrorists and keep it away from our homeland. So they trusted him."

On election day, Latino voters, in particular, appeared to respond to the Bush campaign's conservative 'morals' message.

Analysts on the Democratic side agree that many voters were primarily motivated by these concerns, although they are less certain about why. "Whenever a group of people will vote for a President, put a man in power and do that against their own self-interest, their economic self-interest..." begins Richard "Skip" Daly, business manager of the Laborers, Hod Carriers, Cement Workers and Miners Local Union 169, before stopping and rewording his thought. He tries again: "They voted for a Republican who's got the biggest deficit spending ever; they voted against all of their self-interest. And the issue that came out in exit polling was 'we voted on the moral values.' What that says to me is, these people believe it's more important than their family's well-being that we don't have abortion. And, to me, that is an intolerance that we have not experienced in this country since we put into insignificance the Ku Klux Klan."

With five Electoral College votes, Nevada was one of the key swing states of the desert West. Much of the pro-Kerry effort was focused on the state's second city, Reno, nestled in a high desert bowl, surrounded by mountains that, by the time of the election, were thickly blanketed in snow.

Almost every week, from early September onward, hundreds of volunteers—mobilized by trade unions, by grassroots organizations such as America Coming Together and MoveOn.org, and by the Democratic Party itself—turned out to canvass the town. They reminded people at the door that 86,000 Nevadans had lost their health insurance since Bush came into office, that workers were losing overtime pay because of new laws rammed through by Bush's Congressional allies; they talked to Latino immigrants about deportations, detention without trial and other rollbacks of the rights of migrants; talked to Native Americans at the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony about tribal sovereignty. The week before the election, it seemed that half of Northern California's activists had decamped across the rugged Sierra Nevada, driving I-80 over the winter-wonderland landscape of the Lake Tahoe area, 7,000 feet above sea level, down into the old casino-lined streets of downtown Reno and out into the desert suburbs, to put on one last great push for John Kerry.

Reno was bombarded with an unprecedented number of TV and radio political ads. Kerry came to speak before a crowd of 12,000 people, Edwards visited, Teresa Heinz Kerry visited, Elizabeth Edwards came to the county three times, Bush came twice (the first President to campaign in Reno since Reagan, in 1984, says Forsythe) and Laura Bush and Dick Cheney each dropped in three times.

The Kerry campaign's Nevada strategy was to shore up the Democratic majority in Clark County, home to Las Vegas and to about two-thirds of the state's population, and to tamp down the Republican majority in Washoe County, home to roughly 20 percent of the state's population. It didn't work. When the votes were tallied, the Democrats had managed to narrow Bush's margin in Washoe County to 4 percent, down from 9 percent in 2000; but that achievement was diluted by the fact that 67 percent of Washoe County's registered voters came out to vote, a lower percentage than in any other county in the state—thus numerically diminishing the signficance of Kerry's percentage gains there. And the strategy failed entirely in Las Vegas. In Clark County Kerry did win, but only by 26,000 votes, out of a total of over half a million cast, nowhere near enough to cancel out the conservative bent of the rest of the state.

This was particularly disappointing given that the county had nearly 44,000 more registered Democrats than Republicans. Indeed, according to an article by John Judis, posted on the online version of *The New Republic* in August, in the first eight months of 2004 Democrats picked up a net gain over the Republicans of more than 15,000 new registered voters in Clark County, much of it due to the registration of Latino migrants. One Latino group alone, Voices for Working Families, claimed to have registered 23,324 new voters by late September.

But after all was said and done, on election day Latino voters, in particular, appeared to respond to the Republican Party's conservative "morals" message—as large numbers of Latinos also did in Reno, according to both Democratic and GOP strategists there. Before the election, newspapers reported that Republican strategists thought they would need 40 percent of the Latino vote to win. AP exit poll data suggest they hit that target.

After the election, local Republicans were gleeful that their focus on "values" had paid off. "The Republicans embraced family values and morals, which is what this race was all about," Washoe County Republican Central Committee spokesman Bob Larkin argues. "The liberal portion of the Democratic Party was ostracizing Latinos because of their family values, and the Republican Party was embracing them." The GOP's Forsythe also believes this issue won it for Bush in Nevada. "We were able to get the Christian vote out," she says proudly. "The people from the churches. We went fishing where the fishes are. We targeted precincts. 'Moral moms' wanted to get back to family values. They're not antigay, but they're anti–gay

Sasha Abramsky, the author of Hard Time Blues *(St. Martin's), is working on a book on disenfranchisement in the United States.*

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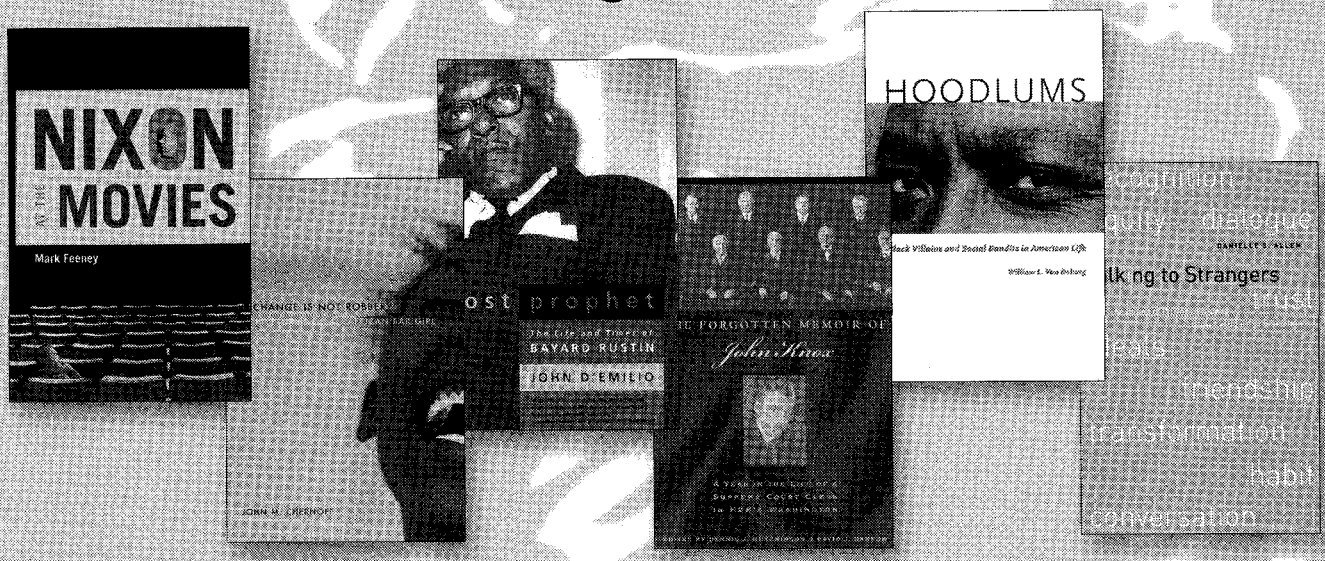

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marriage. That was very important to them—and abortion."

Catholic churches like Little Flower, in southwest Reno, had targeted Latino voters with pamphlets and sermons on abortion and gay marriage. Canvassers in Latino neighborhoods found that especially among men, these were bedrock issues—far more so than was the case in white communities in Reno, where more people were concerned about terrorism and Iraq, and where the Republicans concentrated more on pushing the fear buttons. "We would knock on a door where the woman is the citizen," says Tahis Castro, a 61-year-old, originally from Costa Rica, and a longtime organizer with the Culinary Workers Union. "And the husband, who is not a citizen, comes up and asks, 'Is he supporting gay marriage between man and man, and woman and woman?" The Republicans saturated the two Spanish-language TV stations, Univision and Azteca America, with ads on terrorism and taxes—but even more so on "values" and religion.

Union canvassers tried to hammer home a message about 'jobs, overtime, healthcare, education for Latinos and respect on the job.'

By contrast, on the English-language stations, the infamous wolves ad ran more frequently than ads about "values." Anti-Kerry spots also ran—on the Karl Rove principle of shoring up your own weak spots by attacking your opponent's strong suits—accusing Kerry of flip-flopping on Yucca Mountain, leaving unsaid the fact that Bush was strongly in favor of the dump.

On election day Spanish radio ads warned those who hadn't yet cast ballots about the moral carnage that would result from a Kerry victory. And GOP precinct organizers worked their lists, feeding off an unprecedented statewide effort that involved more than 2 million mail drops and more than 200,000 volunteer phone calls, and using PalmPilots to e-mail back to local HQ the names of likely Republican voters who hadn't yet voted, who needed to be prodded to turn out as the day wore on.

Castro says that union canvassers tried to hammer home the message that the election was about "jobs, overtime, healthcare, education for Latinos and respect on the job." Yet it appears that a substantial minority of union members didn't respond. In 2000 fully 49 percent of union members who voted in Nevada favored Bush. The data for 2004 is not yet fully available, although exit polls suggested 43 percent union support for Bush in Nevada, consistent with the nationwide figure for this year's election.

At the same time, outside Nevada's urban centers, in the sparsely populated, non-unionized rural counties, Bush consolidated his support, apparently defeating Kerry on "morals," especially among the Mormon communities of eastern Nevada, and also on wedge issues of more concern to Western Goldwater/McCain Republicans. Hunters and sportsmen, fired up by a strongly pro–Second Amendment speech delivered by Cheney in the conservative community of Elko and buoyed by the Republican Party's leafleting of Nevada's gun shops, came out against the Democrats' gun-control policies—policies that some Western progressives say must now change. The Democrats, says Bob Fulkerson, director of the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (who took time off from his non-partisan job to campaign for the Democrats) should say something "about the sanctity of the right to keep and bear arms. In the West, it's part of what we're about. It kills us with labor unions here. I'll bet a hundred dollars that the labor voters who voted for Bush did so on guns. They're hunters and love their guns."

The mining industry—and, the county results suggest, many mine workers—reacted against Kerry's calls for stricter environmental standards and antipollution measures. And ranchers came out against "big government"—which the Democrats are seen here to be creatures of. "The Bureau of Land Management in rural Nevada is like Satan," explains 74-year-old Nevada historian Jim Hulse, professor emeritus at the University of Nevada in Reno and author of books such as *The Silver State*, over a coffee in his house west of downtown. "BLM people are not at all welcome in their efforts to manage the range lands or restrict off-road usage. They're anathema to rural Nevada." In counties defined by mining and ranching, Bush got two to three times as many votes as Kerry.

These disparate groups, when added to the much larger urban vote totals from Las Vegas and Reno, proved numerically strong enough to keep Nevada red.

Three days after the election I headed to Reno and parked myself in the gaudy Circus Circus casino-hotel—one of only two fully unionized casinos in the city—for four days, in a twelfth-floor room looking out across the gridlike streets to the snowy slopes beyond. The casinos were in full swing, and the video arcades at Circus Circus—with games-of-the-times like Target Terror—were jammed, as were the bars, strip clubs and instant-wedding chapels around town. As I listened to conversations, hardly anybody seemed to be talking politics. Reno must be a particularly galling town for obsessive political types to live in; it is, after all, where people come to deliberately block out the "real world," the world of politics and wars (the Falluja offensive was just getting under way) and economic uncertainties, behind a great canopy of blinking, twitching neon pizazz.

There was an irony in talking with residents about the electoral victory of moral fundamentalism while garrisoned in a junior version of Sin City, surrounded by casinos and bars and topless cabarets, by porno booths and, in the desert counties outside town, legalized brothels. Quite clearly, these sin palaces were not about to go out of business anytime soon. In fact, the economic elite of northern Nevada that profits from the "sin" business loved the Republican victory—loved the lower taxes it heralded, the deregulation of the workplace, the tilting of the playing field ever more steeply against organized labor.

The election outcome has certainly emboldened powerful fundamentalist figures in already conservative parts of the country—Mississippi, Alabama, Oklahoma, etc.—and strengthened their position in Washington. But in places like Nevada and, even more, California and New York, Bush's victory—largely cobbled together, in Nevada at least, on the issues of gun control, abortion, gay marriage and fear of terrorism—may be felt most immediately in other areas: for instance, in changes to the economic and regulatory role of federal government, the compact between government and citizen on Social Security, taxes, workplace protec-

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tion, environmental safeguards and the provision of healthcare. Republican Bob Larkin—the local spokesman who'd previously told me the election was all about "values"—talks about how Bush was "hired" by Republicans to bring about economic deregulation and expansion.

"In an area like Reno," says Rich Houts of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Northern Nevada, a huge man with an unkempt, bushy beard, "it'd be very easy for employers to find loopholes to exempt employees from overtime. In the service industries, the casinos, they rely on overtime to survive. If they lose overtime, working two jobs they still won't survive. I'm worried about more attacks on our union—like they did to the TSA [Transportation Security Administration] folks; saying, 'You can't belong to unions.' Or coming up with legislation that ties our hands so bad we can't function. Privatizing Social Security is a major concern for us. [Bush's] attack on overtime pay—it's just going to keep getting worse. The workplace is going to become a much more dangerous place to be."

The same GOP spokesman who told me the election was about 'values' says Bush was 'hired' to bring about economic deregulation.

"The intellect and the ability of freethinking is not in the hearts and minds of the people who voted," asserts Skip Daly. He was sitting in an office on the wall of which hung a poster with Pastor Niemöller's famous quote about the Nazis, "First they came for the Jews...."

"I believe the Republican Party is saying, 'We're no longer going to protect the minority.' I'm dumbfounded at where, when I follow these things to their conclusion, this country is headed. Please tell me I got it wrong. I just don't think people are thinking. I don't. It's dumbfounding to me. We've turned a corner."

Vicki LoSasso, a 56-year-old women's rights organizer, who helped coordinate drivers to take people to the polls and who recalled proudly that more than 1,000 volunteers descended on the town's Democratic headquarters the weekend before the election, was feeling particularly galled by the outcome. "We put so much into this, and it really felt like it was going to make a difference," LoSasso says. "And we still lost." She worried about a new round of cuts to federal grants for programs tailored to abused women and children—the government recently cut $325,000 in Violence Against Women Act grants to Nevada. She was also concerned about a moral tyranny—not necessarily one that would be imposed on Nevada overnight but a creeping cultural transformation that would emanate outward from the fundamentalist core of the country. "I honestly have some deep fears about the whole country becoming a theocracy if the trends we see continue." Deep down, LoSasso felt it was possible the Republicans had rigged the electronic voting machines to insure a victory. But, at the same time, she also realized it was likely they had simply outvoted the rest of us. "What's more frightening is that they might not have stolen it." She laughs nervously, a middle-aged blond woman in Southwestern jewelry and casual-but-expensive winter clothing. "If they didn't steal it, there are more of them than there are of us."

"I'm trying to figure out where I fit in a post-11/2 world," LoSasso bluntly stated. Tahis Castro told me that the only other time she'd felt so bereft, so personally affected, was when her mother had died. A third woman suggested America was "rushing forward into the 1950s."

Reno is a historically small "c" conservative town, with weaker trade unions than in Las Vegas. Yet it still has a healthy underside of radicalism. Some of the people who make up this radical underside told me they now feared "payback." Their fear was likely exaggerated in the misery of the moment; but some of it was based on real evidence of a vindictive conservatism, which targets dissenters as if they were enemies rather than simply political opponents.

A few days earlier the tax-exempt status of the NAACP had come under scrutiny after its president had made supposedly anti-Bush speeches; in Reno, the head of the state ACLU phoned me and asked me not to quote his staff making anti-Bush comments because the organization didn't want to suffer the same fate as the NAACP.

NAACP staffers and other African-American community activists, meanwhile, talked of an "under the wire," but all-too-real, attack on civil rights and affirmative-action programs in a state with more than its fair share of white supremacist groups and disaffected young skinheads. "I wonder if these far-right groups see it as an opportunity to be more visible," mused Janet Serial of the NAACP, after she'd mentioned that Reno was known to some as the little Mississippi of the West. "They're there, and they played a big part in this election."

Union organizers, such as Skip Daly and Rich Houts, anticipate a Republican push for national right-to-work laws specifically to damage union power as payback for their support of Kerry. "We're going to have to educate our members," Houts argues. "Most rank-and-file members have the attitude, 'We've got a union contract, so we're protected forever'—not realizing one sweep of the pan, or one bill, could take away that contract. It may not affect union members immediately, but there will be a long-term effect once they start negotiating contracts in a year or two."

Republicans and Democrats in Reno have very little common ground politically these days. But both groups agree that the Republicans' conservative "morals" message, along with the GOP's ability to tap into the populace's fear of terrorism, contributed handily to Bush's narrow election victory in Nevada. If I were a betting man, however, I'd have found a bookie in some neon-lit corner of town and wagered a fair sum that Houts was right: Despite the voters' concerns about morals and terrorism, the election's impact on Reno's residents would be primarily economic. The casino workers stand to lose overtime pay; more and more working families will probably lose access to health insurance; trade-union members will sooner or later run up against newly emboldened employers during contract negotiations; and more poor people are going to find their access to government programs in jeopardy, while their wealthier neighbors in the vast estates dotting the foothills around town will see their tax bills lowered, and lowered again, as the second Bush term gets under way. ■

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THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT PAIN TREATMENT:

The Drug Enforcement Administration recently posted new guidelines on the DEA website to stop the unjustified harassment and prosecution of pain doctors.

THE BAD NEWS ABOUT PAIN TREATMENT:

Two months later the DEA deleted the guidelines, citing unspecified "misstatements."

No one knows why the DEA suddenly withdrew its own rules -- the Agency isn't talking. But it may have been the fact that the guidelines protected doctors from prosecution if they unwittingly prescribed opiates to addicts who deceived them. The government is currently prosecuting several physicians for exactly that conduct.

Over 30 million Americans suffer from chronic pain. A great many may need double or triple the normal amount of medication -- and they are almost always under-treated. These people could legitimately get relief with opioid drugs but they can't find doctors willing to prescribe enough to kill the pain. Taking opioids for pain relief rarely leads to addiction but physicians fear that prescribing large doses will attract the attention of over zealous federal agents, a risk that includes lengthy prison terms. So victims of severe accidents, failed surgery, terminal cancer, and the like are often left to writhe in agony.

Over the last two years the DEA tried to address this crisis, working with medical specialists from the University of Wisconsin's Pain and Policy Studies Group. They set guidelines that would both instruct and safeguard physicians, allowing them to prescribe adequate levels of pain medication without fear of harassment.

These guidelines or something like them should be reinstated so that no one has to suffer needlessly.

Common Sense for Drug Policy
www.CommonSenseDrugPolicy.org www.DrugWarFacts.org
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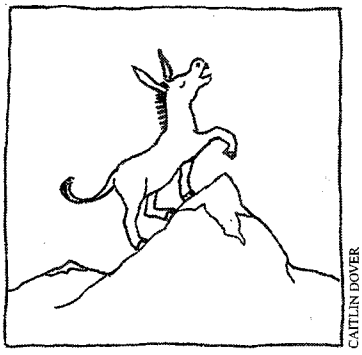
THE WEST IS NOT NEARLY AS 'RED' AS THE RED/BLUE MAPS AND PUNDITS WOULD SUGGEST.

Democrats Score in the Rockies

JOHN NICHOLS

Imagine a parallel universe where, instead of crying in their beer as the election results rolled in on November 2, Democrats were raising microbrews in toasts to their unprecedented success. Now, stop imagining and focus on the Rocky Mountain West, a region that trended so Republican in the 1990s that a popular joke suggested gays and lesbians were afraid to come out of the closet for fear of being thought to be Democrats. This year the Democrats got the last laugh. While those so-simplistic-as-to-be-useless maps of partisan breakdowns in the presidential race paint the region as hopelessly Republican—feeding the sense that wide expanses of America are lost forever to the Democratic Party—Dan Petegorsky of the Western States Center invites a closer look, which reveals that "the 'red' label on the presidential map contrasts sharply with the state-level results."


CAITLIN DOVER

On the same day that George W. Bush was winning nationally and Republicans were increasing their majorities in Congress, Democrats in the eight states of the Rocky Mountain West were winning state and local contests at a rate not seen in decades and offering valuable lessons for the national Democratic Party, organized labor and progressive activist groups that are sorely in need of new models for campaigning. "Before the pundits write this off as the year when nothing seemed to work right for the Democrats," says Montana Democratic Party executive director Brad Martin, "there is a Western story that needs to be told."

Actually, there are several stories. Shifting demographics, local issues and the extent to which the presidential contest was fought out on the ground had varying influences on state results. But there were some constants: Western Democrats tended to abandon the national party's template and focus on local issues, they relied far more heavily on volunteers than paid staff and they worked much, much harder—and with considerable success—to attract rural voters.

The one other constant was good news. Here's just a little of what happened in the Rocky Mountain West on November 2:

§ Montana elected its first Democratic governor in twenty years. The new governor, rancher Brian Schweitzer, joins Democratic chief executives in Arizona, New Mexico and Wyoming. Montana Democrats also took back the offices of state attorney general, auditor and superintendent of public instruction. A victory in a key state Public Service Commission race gave Democrats control of Montana's chief regulatory body. They shifted control of the State Senate from 29-21 Republican to 27-23 Democrat. And they came within one vote of taking control of the Montana House. The Democratic delegation includes eight Native Americans, several of whom were set to assume leadership positions in their respective legislative chambers.

§ Colorado Democrats won both a US Senate seat and a US House seat that had been held by Republicans. They also reversed Republican majorities in the state House and Senate to take control of both chambers for the first time in forty-four years, and installed the state's first female State Senate president, a female majority leader in the state House and an African-American Senate president pro tem. The newly empowered Democrats immediately signaled to conservative Republican Governor Bill Owens that he had better select a moderate to replace outgoing Attorney General Ken Salazar—the Democrat who won the state's US Senate seat. The new Democratic Senate majority leader, Ken Gordon, said that to win legislative approval for his nominee, Owens would have to appoint someone with "mainstream values." Asked to define that term, Gordon said, "Not John Ashcroft."

§ Even in the states with the heaviest patterns of Republican voting in the region—and, as it happens, the nation—Democrats scored both symbolic victories and sweet successes. In Wyoming, US House candidate Ted Ladd, whose name never appeared on lists of targeted Democratic challengers, took 42 percent of the vote, the best percentage for a Democratic Congressional candidate in fourteen years. Idaho elected its first openly lesbian legislator, Nicole LeFavour, an environmental activist who easily claimed a Boise seat in the State House. And the *Salt Lake Tribune* declared on the day after the election, "While the nation and most of Utah tilt further to the right, Salt Lake County is solidifying as a bastion for the left." The new county mayor and the three at-large county council members are all Democrats. The local government wins are part of a trend throughout the region, where Democrats in recent years have taken charge of mayoral posts in Billings, Boise, Denver, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Salt Lake City and Santa Fe.

§ Voters in Western states cast their ballots on the green side of a number of environmental referendums, with Montanans refusing by a 58–42 margin to reverse a six-year-old ban on dangerous cyanide leach mining, and Coloradans passing a Renewable Energy Amendment, which requires major public utilities to get 10 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2015. Nevada voters approved a state minimum-wage hike, Montana voters backed medical marijuana and Colorado voters endorsed a tobacco tax that proponents hope will free substantial new money for healthcare and children's programs.

§ Though John Kerry was dismissed as a "Massachusetts liberal," a phrase that ought to be the kiss of political death in a region where the word "Eastern" can be taken as an insult, the Democrat came close to winning two states that went easily for George Bush in 2000—Colorado and Nevada—and improved the Democratic percentage of the presidential vote in seven of

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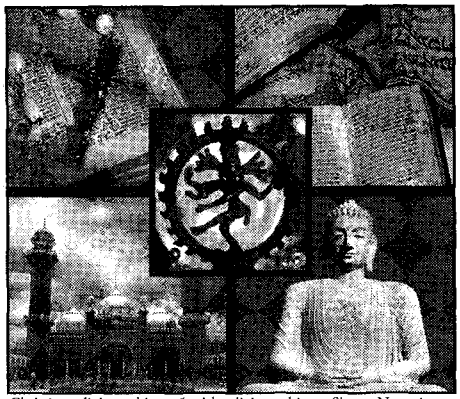

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the region's eight states. Even in states where Kerry took a drubbing, the Democratic campaign showed strength—moving up five points in Montana, a state where he never campaigned. In Wyoming one county backed the Democratic presidential ticket. And it turned out to be Teton County, the home of Vice President Dick Cheney, whose neighbors picked the Democratic ticket by a healthy 53–45 margin.

Surveying the results from his office in Missoula, former US Representative Pat Williams said, "When you look at what happened in the West on November 2, it's wildly encouraging. It's a Democratic sweep in Montana, big advances in Colorado, pickups everywhere—Democrats winning in places where they haven't won in decades." Williams, a Democrat who left the House eight years ago, has a new catchphrase, "Montana? A Red State? Take Another Look." He's not alone. Democrats in a number of Western states are trying, with somewhat limited success, to call attention to the fact that their region is not nearly as red as the red/blue maps and the pundits would suggest.

There is no one explanation for the improvement of Democratic fortunes in this region. Like any set of election results, those coming out of states like Montana and Colorado are complicated by factors ranging from population shifts to local issues to the relative appeal of particular candidates. But there are signals that can be taken away from the region's results. For Democrats, they may be some of the most instructive lessons to come out of the November 2 voting.

For instance, while many pundits saw in the national election results a signal that Democrats were out of touch with "moral values"—the hot code phrase for opposition to gay marriage and abortion rights—Western Democrats found that one of their big advantages was a growing sense among voters that Republicans had gotten a little too in touch—or, to be more precise, obsessed—with that theme. "The Republican far right has overplayed its hand in the West for more than a decade," says Williams. "I heard a lot of people say that the Republican Party seemed to be more concerned about legislating mores than creating jobs.

Deciding What's Next

After too many years of watching the Democratic Party and its national candidates lose the crucial ground games of American politics, organized labor, activist groups and wealthy progressives intervened in the 2004 campaign with the goal of creating a "shadow party" that would be faster, smarter and more flexible than official Democrats could be on a landscape redefined by new campaign finance laws and White House political czar Karl Rove's ever-evolving strategies. Groups such as America Coming Together (ACT), the Media Fund and MoveOn-PAC succeeded, provided early advertising in battleground states, engaged in grassroots campaigns where the party was weak and drew millions of new and infrequent voters into the process. But in the most important sense—winning the presidency and key Congressional battles—the shadow-party initiative fell short.

The organizations and individuals who created this new infrastructure now have to decide whether and how to carry on. A few groups, such as the Media Fund, a tax-exempt 527 organization created to develop and pay for television ads in battleground states, will fold as planned—although Media Fund head Harold Ickes could resurface as the new chair of the Democratic National Committee. But most groups, including ACT, which raised and spent more than $60 million on voter mobilization, are already taking steps to make themselves permanent fixtures, while trying to assess what worked and what didn't. Now, says Progressive Majority executive director Gloria Totten, "we'll see just how strong our movement is." The extent to which these conversations lead to a coherent strategy remains to be seen; the Center for American Progress is attempting to pull together a meeting of key funders, such as George Soros and Peter Lewis, that could provide some impetus in that direction. And ACT, working with key players in the Service Employees union's political shop, may do the same with an evolving dialogue on tactics.

There is already a healthy discussion about the need to reach out to rural voters, whose overwhelming support for Bush and the Republicans offset gains in registration and turnout in urban areas of key battleground states. Another topic is whether Democratic-leaning 527s placed too much emphasis on paying campaigners, as opposed to the Bush campaign's model of training ideologically impassioned volunteers. One particularly controversial strategy that has come under scrutiny involved paying operatives based on the number of voters they registered—a move that Republican critics said encouraged dubious registrations and earned groups such as Project Vote embarrassing headlines around the country. Other issues include the role of celebrity campaigners and whether some of the money spent on TV ads might have been better spent on things like targeted mailings to base voters. And, of course, there is a deeper discussion about whether 527 groups will remain satellites of the Democratic Party or seek to use their voter lists and other resources to influence the direction of the party in a more progressive direction.

Some groups are already moving fast. MoveOn.org is seeking to harness the frustration over the close result in Ohio and direct it into a campaign to count every vote and encourage a federal investigation of questions about election machinery, ballots and counting procedures. The group is also preparing to get more involved with media watchdog efforts, including a push to challenge Sinclair Broadcasting, the company that sought to air a last-minute anti–John Kerry film, when licenses for its sixty-two television stations come up for renewal. The nonpartisan National Voice movement, which initially planned to fold after the election, has found that its state-based coalitions of advocacy groups want to carry on with voter registration efforts and with initiatives to draw previously disengaged citizens more deeply into the process.

Mark Ritchie, national coordinator of National Voice, says progressives must study the success of Florida and Ohio referendums to increase the minimum wage and consider using referendums and initiatives on economic issues to mobilize disenfranchised and disenchanted voters, just as conservatives do on social issues. "It doesn't just work to say, 'Your grandfather died for your right to vote,'" Ritchie says. "We have to think more about how we say, 'You can make your life better by voting.' If we learn how to do that better, we'll see 2004 not as a year when a particular candidate lost but as a year when we all started a process of renewing and expanding our democracy." —J.N.

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In Western states, where wages are low, that doesn't make sense." Across the West, Democrats explained their advances at least in part by suggesting that voters had gotten sick and tired of moralizing Republicans. "The Republicans' obsession with narrow cultural issues while the state's looming fiscal crisis was ignored drove a deep wedge between fiscally conservative live-and-let-live Republicans and the neo-conservative extremists with an agenda," explains *Denver Post* columnist Diane Carman.

Before the election, Susan Good, who in the 1990s served as chair of the Montana Republican Party, told radio listeners in that state to vote for Democratic legislative candidates because the Republican Party had been hijacked by ideologues, who had made it "stagnant." Another Montana Republican, State Senator John Bohlinger, declaring that "somehow we lost our way," jumped party lines to run for lieutenant governor on the Democratic ticket. Charles Johnson, a Statehouse reporter for the *Montana Standard* newspaper, said, "By most accounts, Montanans loved the bipartisan approach in the ad run by the Democratic team running for governor and lieutenant governor. 'I'm John Bohlinger, I'm a Republican businessman from Billings. And I'm Brian Schweitzer, a Democratic farmer from Whitefish.'" Johnson said it was the most effective ad of the campaign.

The embrace of bipartisanship by Democrats running in a number of Western states played well with voters. But it did not involve an abandonment of principles. Rather, Democrats found old-school Republicans like Bohlinger, whom one Montana newspaper described as "a popular state senator known for his moderate—some would say liberal—views on education and health care," and offered them an opportunity to join in a broad fight against the extreme right-wing forces that have taken charge of most Western Republican parties. There is a huge lesson here for national Democrats and their allies, who failed in the 2004 campaign to make effective use of the many prominent Republicans—and traditionally Republican-leaning newspapers—who said they could not back Bush.

Another huge lesson for the 527 groups that assisted the Kerry campaign and national Democrats has to do with the identification of issues. Democrats in Western states, most of which were not targeted by national campaigns, developed their own sets of issues. In a number of states they emphasized the need for openness in government, which had become a concern during years of wall-to-wall Republican rule that often saw important decisions made in closed caucuses.

Western Democrats also focused a great deal of attention on the threat to water quality posed by environmentally insensitive practices such as coal-bed methane extraction [see Eyal Press, "Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch," October 11]. And they spent a lot of time explaining their positions, developing detailed accounts of why such practices—which were backed by energy-industry lobbyists and their Republican allies—pose a threat to the livelihoods of farmers and ranchers in states like Montana. In Colorado, Democrats pushed renewable energy and water rights initiatives. In states across the region, they embraced the concerns of Native Americans, who have emerged as a powerful and, in many states, reliably Democratic voting bloc.

Along with their own issues, they developed their own kinds

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of campaigns. A new group, Democrats for the West, served as something of a clearinghouse for ideas and cooperative initiatives—for instance, the Democratic governors of Wyoming and Arizona traveled to Montana to aid Schweitzer's gubernatorial campaign. Campaign techniques varied from state to state but they usually placed a huge emphasis on using volunteers rather than the paid staffers favored by some party and 527 groups that worked the national campaign for the Democrats. In Montana, with a field staff of twenty-one, the state Democratic Party fielded close to 3,000 volunteers for get-out-the-vote efforts. "We reached out early to the pro-choice community, the hunting and fishing community and folks from the labor movement, and we said, 'Look, you've got to be a part of this,'" explained Brad Martin of the Montana Democrats, who came to the party from the public interest research group (PIRG) movement. "We have a strong history of the party being an activist organization, and we really emphasized that in this campaign."

To be sure, there were some home-grown 527 groups, like Forward Colorado, which was formed by four millionaire environmentalists in that state. But Forward Colorado, which is credited with playing a major role in shifting the balance in that state's legislative races, remained close to the ground. The group didn't impose cookie-cutter approaches developed in Washington; rather, it worked closely with local activists to develop messages and mailings targeted for individual districts.

So it was that, on November 2, while national Democrats were wringing their hands after getting wiped out in rural regions of states like Ohio, Democrats in the West were pointing to successes in remote counties. On Colorado's Western Slope, Democrat John Salazar's campaign slogan was "Send a Farmer to Congress." In a district that had elected Republicans in the past, voters followed Salazar's advice. They also backed his brother, Ken Salazar, for the state's US Senate seat. Ken Salazar, who campaigned in his pickup truck and delivered a stump speech that focused on the need to defend the interests of "the forgotten parts of Colorado," ran more than ten points ahead of the national ticket in rural areas. He did so while backing abortion rights and civil unions for gays and lesbians. As Brad Woodhouse, a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee spokesman, noted after the election, Salazar "pays homage and respect to the beliefs of rural voters, while also staying true to the core Democratic principles." If there is a single lesson that Democrats and their activist allies need to learn after what was for the most part a 2004 electoral debacle, it is that rural America is still winnable. And they can start by looking west. ■

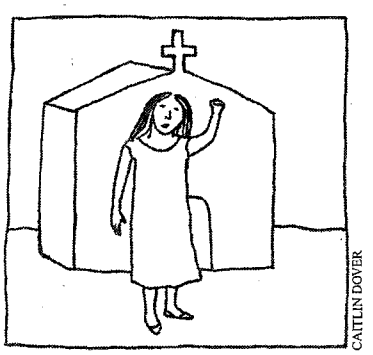
A GATHERING OF FEMINISTS IS AN OCCASION TO COMMISERATE AND TO STRATEGIZE.

Southern Ms.

ASHLEY SAYEAU

Memphis, Tennessee

Call it a tale of two churches, though Bellevue Baptist is more of a small town than a church. It has a library, a bookstore, so many entrances you could get lost (believe me), hip-hop shows, harp lessons, more baseball fields than a prep school, four volleyball leagues, its own screensavers and three weatherproof crucifixes so huge and so well-lit that at night they obliterate the stars.


CAITLIN DOVER

Across town, in stark contrast, is the First Congregational Church, housed in an inconspicuous pale yellow building in an area where people would be ill advised to go out alone at night. Here you can see a midwife, join an interfaith alliance or pick up a pamphlet on the local gay youth center—and have it actually be a pamphlet for a real local gay youth center, not just guerrilla advertising of the Jerry Falwell or Pat Robertson variety. It was also recently home to the sixth annual Southern Girls Convention, where I had come in search of an endangered species: the Southern feminist.

It's hardly a secret that the South is no bastion of women's liberation. When I asked the 100 or so participants, from college students to veteran libbers, what challenges Southern women face that those in other regions may not, the most common response was laughter. "It feels about twenty years behind other parts of the country," said First Congregational's Pastor Cheryl Cornish. As unabashed liberals in the heart of the Bible Belt, they saw their battle as a very long-term, if not romantic, one. Robin Jacks, who co-founded the event with fellow activist Jennifer Sauer, said that when they organize progressive protests, "We get double digits and call it a success." In July, Bellevue held an antigay "Battle for Marriage" convention. More than 10,000 people attended.

Here in Memphis, where I was born and nearly raised, "huntin' shows" and firecrackers are a God-given right, and road signs wonder, "CHRISTIAN? SINGLE?" Though I eventually grew up in Chicago with my mother, every summer and every holiday I went down South, where the people I loved most rattled on about "the blacks," got pregnant entirely too early and only half-jokingly called me a Yankee.

Because of the distance and one determined mother, I went on to live a nice freethinking existence, complete with a college degree from a small liberal arts school in Massachusetts, an apartment in Brooklyn and a mean Southern accent that I pull out

Ashley Sayeau, formerly Nelson, has written on women and politics for a variety of anthologies and publications, including The Nation, Salon *and* Dissent.

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whenever I want to make my friends laugh. Growing up in the North, I learned very quickly (often to the tune of *Deliverance*) that being a Southerner was nothing to be proud of.

And yet I could never escape the feeling that Southerners were my people, the sense that if some combination of circumstance and luck hadn't intervened, I might never have gotten the chance to hate every day of high school without worrying about postpartum depression and daycare, as my cousin and stepsister down South did. Or to have a husband who doesn't mind if I talk "proper," a luxury not shared by another relative, as she revealed to me over Christmas dinner, before saying in a desperate whisper, "I'm 22, and this is my life."

The South has a long history of stifling dissent and leaving women with few alternatives to traditional roles. The suffrage movement there was decades late, and it never gained the momentum it did in other regions. Nine of the ten states to vote against the Nineteenth Amendment were below the Mason-Dixon line. And the image of the chaste and devoted Southern white woman has been used to justify everything from patriarchy to lynching. Women who defied this ideal were accused of nothing short of treason. Said one Alabama state senator in 1917 of Southern suffragists, "[They] have allowed themselves to be misled by bold women who are the product of the peculiar social conditions of our Northern cities into advocating a political innovation the realization of which would be the undoing of the South...if they succeed then indeed was the blood of their fathers shed in vain." Fidelity of this sort is difficult to escape—it's a loyalty that still today slips quickly into a fear so profound that a grown woman might not tell her family she's in town to write a piece on feminism, but only to check out a conference about women at a church.

Southern white women are the most conservative in the country—exit polls from this year's election reveal that 68 percent voted for Bush and only 32 percent for Kerry, double the margin in 2000. The only other regional female subgroup Bush won was white women in the Midwest, but only by 7 percentage points. But Southern women suffer immensely from conservative policies. According to a 2002 report by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, seven of the nine worst states for women are in the South—in terms of earnings, access to health and reproductive services, and political participation.

Like most things Southern, it is impossible to discuss feminism in the South (or the absence of it) without turning to God. For the women at the conference, the church was the institution that drew the most ire. Younger ones recounted being given Bibles in public schools and being taken to fake parties where instead of alcohol they were served a super-sized Jesus on the rocks. As University of Alabama student Shelley Crumpton said, "People wonder why the South votes against its interests, but they don't understand how much religion shapes everything here. It's a worldview." Jacks agreed, noting that religious ideology often obscures social or economic reality. "Republicans would never win Mississippi if it wasn't for their promises to 'save the babies' and keep the gays from marrying."

In the past decade the religious right has been particularly effective at rallying youth, and especially young girls, in the South, where abstinence-only campaigns like True Love Waits have flourished. Their mothers have been hooked too. Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins's *Left Behind* series, in which the saved leave Earth for heaven and the rest of us are left behind to fend for ourselves (my husband calls it a "win-win" proposition), has sold more than 62 million copies, mostly in the South and Midwest. According to *Newsweek*, the "'core buyer' is a 44-year-old born-again Christian woman, married with kids, living in the South." Of Southern white women, fundamentalists contribute most mightily to the Republican Party, while the majority of secular women in the region consider themselves political moderates.

This pervasive religious fanaticism has sharply curtailed Southern women's sexual and reproductive freedom. Of public schools that provide any sex education, 55 percent in the South, as opposed to 35 percent nationwide and 20 percent in the Northeast, adhere to a strict abstinence-only curriculum. Not surprisingly, the region also boasts the highest teen birthrates in the country. In 2001, 6.7 percent of girls aged 15–19 gave birth in Mississippi, over three times as many as in New Hampshire. Incidentally, 98 percent of counties in Mississippi had no abortion providers as of 2000.

In the past decade the religious right has been particularly effective at rallying youth, and especially young girls, in the South.

"In the South, the strength of the church has worked very much against women in terms of pushing them into traditional roles, and refusing to deal with sex education, health rights, reproductive rights," said Cornish. Indeed, Mississippi went so far as to enact a law in July permitting all types of healthcare workers and facilities to refuse to perform any service they object to on moral or religious grounds. "We have doctors who won't even issue birth-control prescriptions," Nsombi Lambright of the American Civil Liberties Union's Mississippi branch told the Associated Press.

The obstacles facing Southern African-American women are especially severe. In 1999, the five worst states for African-American women's earnings were in the South. Southern black children are two times more likely than white kids to be poor. Despite this, the region has the lowest welfare benefits and some of the harshest sanctions in the country. Rascaun Ellis, an African-American woman from Mississippi, said this leaves many in her town, particularly young girls, feeling hopeless. She recalled that one of the brightest girls in her high school dropped out after getting pregnant. "She just accepted what she saw as her fate." Participants from Louisiana, where nearly 20 percent of women live in poverty, to Kentucky, where more than half of households headed by women have incomes below $15,000 a year, spoke of how poverty affected their everyday lives, from the roaches in their grocery store to the poorly funded city schools to the fact that it took one attendee's sister a year to recover from a minor injury because most doctors in her town of 17,000 were incompetent.

There's also the issue of political representation—or lack thereof. Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, South Carolina and Oklahoma have the fewest female state legislators in the country. Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, North and South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia have never elected a female US senator. And

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most Southern women who do get elected are Republicans. In a report on the transformation of the Southern Democratic Party, in the November 2004 *Journal of Politics*, historian Merle Black notes that "seventy percent of all southern Democratic statewide officeholders in 2003 were white men, even though they comprised only 21 percent of the party in the electorate. White women and African Americans, men and women, continued to be greatly underrepresented among Democrats elected to statewide offices in comparison to their contributions to the grassroots southern Democratic Party."

Not all participants at the conference, however, rejected their position at the bottom of the political totem pole. Southerners, after all, have always seemed the most energized by local politics. During the three-day conference, I was bombarded with acronyms only a local (and a very particular one at that) would know: the MCIL, or Memphis Center for Independent Living; MAGY, the Memphis Area Gay Youth Center; the Defense Depot Memphis Tennessee Concerned Citizens' Committee (or DDMTCCC!), a local environmental group. While most were involved in women's issues—holding protests at anti-abortion centers that pose as clinics and volunteering at real ones—I met women who worked on voter registration drives, directed their own arts programs and wrote for small political publications. One organized a center for the rights of the disabled. And then there was the Christian housewife who occasionally left her Republican husband and kids at home so she could join a trio of activists who had undertaken the Sisyphean task of speaking against the Israeli occupation of Palestine. And the group from the University of Alabama, Birmingham, who put on orange vests to volunteer as escorts at an abortion clinic "just down the street from the one that was bombed."

While the right hands out Bibles at bus stops and high schools, feminist activists in the South say they aren't allowed such liberties.

Often, there were more letters in their acronyms than women in their groups. Few had heard of *The Nation*. I doubt many could identify Gloria Feldt or Kim Gandy. They seemed to have become feminists by accident—through contact with a hippie aunt, a brazen high school teacher or, I heard again and again, the strongest women they knew: their mothers.

While many Northern liberals urge the Democratic Party to forget the South, and the Kerry campaign all but followed suit, these women stay. I couldn't help but wonder why. Facing everything from bureaucratic red tape (and often fees) for staging protests to the impermeable Southern "be nice" mentality, their activism at times seemed more trouble than it was worth. While the right, many claimed, could pass out Bibles at bus stops and high schools, they would never be allowed such liberties. "They can get away with it, but if I went there with a political solicitation about safe sex, I'd get busted," reported Terry Moon, a local. "Being a progressive here is like being a missionary," said Sarah Rushakoff, another Memphian. "In Memphis," she added, "kids can't wait to get away—go to 'insert cool city here' up North or out West, to a coast."

Nevertheless, most stressed the value of staying in the South. "If you really want to change things, you shouldn't go to New York, you should come to Memphis. This is where the fight is," said Moon, who moved to Memphis eight years ago to start a local chapter of the newsletter *News and Letters* after being involved in women's liberation in Detroit and Chicago since the 1960s. Others praised the sense of community and sincerity they felt typified Southern progressivism. "There is a peculiar strength that develops among Southern women in opposition to the conservative forces—a camaraderie, an intimacy," said Cornish. Many African-Americans, noted Marquita Bradshaw, a local environmentalist, "feel like it has to start here, because this is where it left off."

This sense of strength, if not exactly hope, was palpable. Despite the odds, these activists had made little homes for themselves, often in colleges or the few progressive towns in the South—Athens, Georgia; Asheville, North Carolina. The First Congregational Church was also located in a hip, up-and-coming area with a coffeehouse that had a java special named the Lisa Marie and a bar that sold hard cider (bless them). At any time, I could spot a vegan and almost forget that the irresistibly sweet and articulate Stevie could not walk down many streets without fear of being harassed because she is transgendered, or that another young woman, aged 20 and already a mother twice over, had been called a "drama queen" by a nurse at a Kentucky abortion clinic.

As the conference came to a close, Jacks was visibly frustrated. The event had not drawn as many people as previous ones, and she wondered if it wasn't time to move on. She worked full time, like most, and had never been to college. "I'm 24 and I feel old," she said, head on shoulder. "There was so much excitement at the first one...people had never been to anything like it," she recalled. But after six years, she confesses she's pessimistic. "It's like being in the bell jar. It's a glass ceiling, but it's all around you. And you don't have anything to break the glass with but your fist or your feet, so you just get cut up. It's really hard. It's a never-ending battle that I'm never going to win—at least not in my lifetime. I'm realistic about that, but I still think I have to do my part."

The participants were well versed in what one historian has called the South's civil religion: the Lost Cause. But while they were romantic, they were not foolish. They were invigorated by their underdog status, but they were still eager to be recognized by something larger. "The left has abandoned us," one lamented, reminding me of something my mother once said when I asked her why she—18 years old in 1970—never participated in the women's movement. "I just thought that's how things were in the South. I didn't know there were problems everywhere."

I've often heard tales of strong Southern women. My own past is full of single women who, abandoned by the men in their lives, took extreme measures to care for their children, including a grandmother who sold blood to buy my father shoes. It seemed the South was full of brave and determined women who had never met one another—distracted by poverty, religion and loyalty to a land that hadn't done them any favors. As I boarded my plane back to New York, I knew that while the South might occupy my heart and mind, my feet would remain firmly planted elsewhere. "It is easier for one to run North and join the crowd," Danielle de Preux, a Little Rock activist, had told me. "But to stay and fight, that's the Southern woman." I believed it, I just wasn't sure I could hack it.■

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(Continued From Page 6)

wrong, his authority is legitimate and not to be questioned. In foreign policy, he is also the absolute moral authority and so needs no advice from lesser countries.

The so-called "moral issues" are affronts to strict-father morality. Strict-father marriage cannot be gay; it must be between a man and a woman. For a wife to seek an abortion on her own or a daughter to need one is an affront to strict-father control over the behavior of the women in his family. They are not the main moral issues in themselves; rather they are symbolic of the entire strict-father identity as applied to all spheres of life. That's why they are so powerful for conservatives.

Swing voters have both models—in different parts of their lives—and are unsure about which to apply to politics in a particular election. The job of a candidate is to activate his model in the swing voters. Conservatives know this: By talking to their base, they are activating their base model in swing voters. When liberals move to the right, they are shooting themselves in both feet: They alienate their base and they activate the other side's models in the swing voters, thus helping the other side.

Democrats in Congress need to understand this. They must hold their ground, be positive and be aware that moving to the right is a double disaster. It will only help the radical right's agenda, break with values that unify us and make it harder to awaken our values in swing voters.

The only way to trump their moral values is with our own more traditional and more patriotic moral values. Proclaim them and live them, and we will find that there are many more than 55 million of us.

GEORGE LAKOFF

George Lakoff, author of Moral Politics *and the bestselling* Don't Think of an Elephant! Know Your Values and Frame the Debate, *is professor of linguistics at UC Berkeley and senior fellow at the Rockridge Institute.*

UN Oil for Food 'Scandal'

The CIA's Duelfer report may have confirmed the gross falsity of the WMD claims invoked by the Bush Administration to justify its war against Iraq, but it has also triggered a feeding frenzy in the growing attacks against the United Nations. In January the Iraqi newspaper *Al Mada* published a list of people and organizations, including UN personnel, who supposedly received vouchers from the Iraqi government to purchase oil. In April the General Accounting Office (since renamed the Government Accountability Office) published a report claiming that the Oil for Food (OFF) program had been rife with corruption and that through smuggling and kickbacks, Saddam Hussein had managed to acquire more than $10 billion in illicit funds. A series of Congressional investigations followed, featuring conservative witnesses who pilloried the UN for incompetence, corruption and general unfitness. In the latest hearings chaired by Republican Norm Coleman, the committee staff claimed that Saddam's access to illicit funds totalled over $21 billion—twice the sum claimed by the CIA—and that the money went to terrorists around the world, not to mention (rather astonishingly) the post-Saddam insurgency.

If it is true that Benon Sevan, former head of the OFF program, accepted illicit oil vouchers, then that may well constitute fraud (although the evidence cited against him so far has been tenuous). But it would also have been in direct violation of clear UN policies—hardly an indicator of institutional corruption.

Rarely mentioned, either at the hearings or in the press coverage, was the fundamental distinction between the policies established by the Secretariat and the UN agencies and those that result from decisions of particular member states within the highly politicized Security Council. For example, the CIA report says that the bulk of the illicit transactions were "government to government agreements" between Iraq and a few other countries, for trade outside the OFF program. According to the report, they resulted in income to Iraq of $7.5 billion.

The largest of these arrangements was with Jordan—revenue from which totaled about $4.5 billion. This trade arrangement was the single largest source of Iraqi income outside the OFF program. From 1990 until the OFF program began in late 1996, "Jordan was the key to Iraq's financial survival," according to the report. Why didn't "the UN" do something about it? Because the Security Council—where the United States was by far the single most influential member—decided in May 1991 that no action would be taken to interfere in Iraq's trade with Jordan, America's closest ally in the Arab world.

Likewise, the maritime smuggling that took place under the nose of "the UN" in fact took place under the nose of something called the Multinational Interception Force, a group of member nations that responded to the general invitation of the Security Council for nations to interdict Iraqi smuggling. The "UN" Multinational Interception Force turns out to have consisted almost entirely of the US Navy. The commander of the MIF was at every point, from 1991 to 2003, a rear admiral or vice admiral from the US Fifth Fleet. The United States contributed the overwhelming majority of ships—hundreds in fact. Britain provided the deputy commander and some naval forces and other countries contributed a few ships. The UN itself provided no forces or commanders. "The UN" failure to interdict Saddam's tankers of illicit oil turns out, in nearly every regard, to have been a US naval operation.

The much-vaunted kickbacks on import contracts also turn out to be not quite as advertised. Saddam, the claim goes, inflated the price of import contracts by 5 to 10 percent, then received the difference in cash from the contractors. Thousands of contracts, stretching over years, were involved; how could the UN have been so incompetent as not to notice? In fact, prices inflated by only 5 or 10 percent were difficult to detect precisely because the amounts were so small and often within the normal range of market prices. But when pricing irregularities were large enough that they might have indicated kickbacks, the UN staff did notice. On more than seventy occasions, the staff brought these to the attention of the 661 Committee, the Security Council body charged with implementing the sanctions. On no occasion did the United States block or delay the contracts to prevent the kickbacks from occurring. Although the United States, citing security concerns, blocked billions of dollars of humanitarian contracts—$5 billion were on hold as of July 2002—it never took action to stop kickbacks, even when they were obvious and well documented.

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COMMENT

Far from giving Saddam a free hand, the OFF program involved extensive monitoring and oversight. The government of Iraq first had to submit a list of every single item it hoped to purchase in the coming six months, and the UN staff had to approve the list. Once Iraq had signed a contract with a vendor, the contract was circulated to UNSCOM (later UNMOVIC), to see if there was anything that could be used for military purposes. Every member of the Security Council had the opportunity to review every contract, and each member could block or delay any contract for imports. Every member of the Security Council also had to approve every contract for the sale of oil. If there was cash paid under the table, it did not happen for lack of oversight. It happened despite the most elaborate monitoring system imaginable. And if the members of the Security Council—including the United States—failed to do their job, that is not the fault of Kofi Annan.

The Duelfer report, along with eight sets of Congressional hearings, vitriolic press coverage and considerable ranting by the right, suggest an antipathy toward the UN that goes well beyond election-season maneuvering. The consequences of this scandal will be considerable. We witnessed the ill-fated decision to invade Iraq without Security Council authorization; we might recall that the Security Council would not grant the American demand to authorize an invasion, precisely because the United States was unable to provide any compelling evidence that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. If the world's most respected institution of international governance is rendered impotent by accusations as distorted and exaggerated as these, we should all fear the consequences. JOY GORDON

Joy Gordon, who teaches philosophy at Fairfield University, is completing a book on the Iraq sanctions.

The Fight Goes On

From a permanent campaign to a permanent election? Bloggers, e-voting foes and concerned citizens keep raising questions and hurling charges about the November 2 voting and vote-counting, especially in the fulcrum state of Ohio. And it seems there may be a recount in the Buckeye State, prompted by a request submitted by two minor presidential candidates, David Cobb of the Green Party and Michael Badnarik of the Libertarian Party. That recount will not proceed until the vote is certified by the Secretary of State, Kenneth Blackwell, a conservative who co-chaired the Bush campaign in Ohio. Cobb and Badnarik have reasonably asked Blackwell to recuse himself.

In the swirl of Internet-fueled allegations, assorted issues have emerged and merged: odd voting patterns, suspicious election day activity, voter suppression, "spoiled" ballots and the susceptibility of e-voting machines to errors or, worse, hacking. A recount in Ohio will not address all the problems, real or imagined. It cannot tally votes not cast due to suppression efforts; it cannot include ballots not properly cast. At a recent forum in Columbus, voters complained about long lines, undertrained poll workers and too few, or broken, voting machines—mostly in urban and minority neighborhoods. Was there an organized GOP effort to tamp down the vote in Kerry strongholds? Probably. There is evidence that suppression shenanigans were mounted in Ohio and elsewhere. But the Democrats have done a poor job of chronicling, publicizing and criticizing such GOP chicanery. And while in Ohio there were 93,000 "spoiled" ballots that did not register a vote and 155,000 provisional ballots, a recount that includes those ballots is highly unlikely to erase Bush's lead of 136,000 votes. (Based on my experience examining "spoiled" ballots in Florida, I'd estimate a Kerry pickup of less than 1,000 votes with those ballots.) Moreover, a recount might not uncover problems—intentional or accidental—with electronic voting. "The figures in cooked books often look perfectly fine; so would a cooked vote tally" that used e-voting machines with no paper trail, notes the Electronic Frontier Foundation. "In this election, we are forced to take it on faith that our votes were recorded in the way that we intended." And there are numerous accounts of Kerry voters in Florida who claimed their touch-screen machines initially indicated they had voted for Bush.

E-voting—particularly with machines made by Diebold, a firm headed by a GOP fundraiser that refuses to disclose its source code—should stir skepticism. But suspicion needs reality checks. Stolen election proponents point to Warren County, Ohio, where Bush bagged a net gain of 41,000 votes and where local officials barred reporters from the counting room on election night, claiming the Feds had warned of a terrorist attack. But FBI and homeland security officials denied issuing any warning, and a Democratic Party observer, attorney Jeff Ruppert, told the Associated Press he had free access to the counting during the lockdown and saw "no problems whatsoever." And skeptics have pointed to a Cuyahoga County vote tally that listed more votes than registered voters in several municipalities. But Kimberly Bartlett, an elections officer, told me this was because of software that placed absentee ballots from an entire group of municipalities into the line for a single municipality in that group. She noted that the director of the Cuyahoga board of elections is a registered Democrat.

Not all stolen-election stuff is easily explained. After the election, the doubters zapped around a news report noting that Avi Rubin, a well-known computer scientist who had found a basic security flaw in the code used by Diebold, had criticized the company for claiming to have fixed this problem without making its latest code available for analysis. And various statistical analyses of the vote count have produced puzzling—or, to some, troubling—patterns. Steven Freeman of the University of Pennsylvania wrote a paper claiming that discrepancies between the media consortium exit polls and the vote count in Ohio, Florida and Pennsylvania were a "250 million to one" shot. But "systematic fraud or mistabulation," he wrote, "is a premature conclusion." He urged investigation. On the other hand, pollster John Zogby says his exit polls had Bush leading in Ohio and Florida.

What to make of all this? The national voting complex—a patchwork of systems overseen by political partisans and secretive companies—needs examination, extensive reform and better oversight. A recount in Ohio is well and good. But it probably won't change the results, and it surely won't fix the deep flaws of a system that does provoke justifiable suspicion. DAVID CORN

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

An Artist Beyond Category

ARTHUR C. DANTO

ROMARE BEARDEN

Crossing from the first to the second room of the generous retrospective of Romare Bearden's art, on view through January 9, 2005, at the Whitney Museum of American Art, is not simply to move from one phase to another in Bearden's development; it is to leave one art historical period for another. Bearden was successful in both periods—in the 1940s of the first room, he showed with Samuel Kootz, whose gallery was dedicated to advanced art of the time; and in the 1960s of the second room, he was one of the stars of the important gallery Cordier and Ekstrom. But his work of the two periods was deeply different. In a way, Bearden was beached by the end of the 1940s, as American art moved in a direction that left him behind. It was as if he was then swept up by a different wave altogether, which made it possible for him to become the remarkable artist the show really celebrates. So the art of the second room, and indeed of the remainder of the show, is not an internal evolution out of the art of the first room. It is an art there would have been no way of imagining on the basis of what preceded it, for it is the result of political and artistic forces Bearden did not control. These forces account for the cultural turbulence of the 1960s. Bearden responded to these forces creatively, transforming himself as an artist into something altogether original. The art of the long final phase of Bearden's life and career has to be explained through this creative response. There is no better way to appreciate this than by asking what happened to Bearden in the intervening decade. The 1950s is an essentially missing decade in this show. The 1960s rescued him from failure. That missing decade gives the show a drama that cannot be grasped if we simply think of the art of the second room as what he did next. In the 1950s Bearden was a kind of lost soul.

Bearden abruptly became Bearden around 1964—a miraculous year for him as an artist, when he broke through into a mode of representation distinctively his own and entered the calm waters of a marvelously personal style that was never again challenged, from without or within. It enabled him, over the remaining twenty-four years of his life, to evoke, in his words, "a world through art in which the validity of my Negro experience could live and make its own logic." By "validity," Bearden meant, I think, that his experience as an African-American was not ruled out as a "subject of the artist," to use an expression that was current in Abstract Expressionist discourse. And by "its own logic," he meant that the experience would determine the form through which it was expressed. The breakthrough, however, has to be understood through the collusion of two moments, one art-historical and the other political. In 1964 Pop art freed artists to draw on imagery from ordinary life. That April, Andy Warhol displayed supermarket cartons, including the Brillo box, that brashly defied the imperatives of aesthetic purity that had defined Modernist art. And a few months later came Freedom Summer, in which Southern blacks waged a concerted campaign to demand their civil rights. Bearden was liberated by Pop to find his own language, and the urgency of black liberation gave him his subject. He became a leading artist of the black experience. In the 1940s he had been a gifted cosmopolitan who simply happened to be black.

Pop art liberated Bearden to find his own language in the 1960s, while the urgency of black liberation gave him his subject matter.

The Kootz gallery was one of the centers in which what came to be known as Abstract Expressionism was taking form. Kootz showed the work of Adolph Gottlieb, Robert Motherwell and William Baziotes, who were part of the emerging movement. Bearden belonged to the figu-

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rative wing of Kootz's stable, along with Carl Holty and Byron Browne. I think it's fair to say that the work of these figurative artists was in some significant measure European in inspiration. Bearden's work was in the modified Cubist style that had become a sort of lingua franca of Modernism. Always a person of deep culture and wide reading, he struggled in the 1940s to give visual embodiment to texts by Homer and García Lorca, as well as the Bible. The paintings from the Kootz period are quite rewarding and worth looking at closely. The underdrawing is in fact entirely in the Abstract Expressionist mode: It is made up of the swift, whiplike arabesques, with sudden jazzy reversals, that one sees in Pollock or de Kooning. The images that overlay them are constructed of Cubist panes of color, and feel, especially in the García Lorca series, as if they have been inspired by *Guernica*. But Kootz closed the gallery in 1948, and when he reopened it the following year the figurative contingent was no longer part of it.

1949 marked the beginning of what Mark Tansey, in a brilliant allegory, calls *The Triumph of the New York School*. Bearden, Browne and Holty belonged, one might say, to the American wing of the defeated School of Paris. And Bearden strove in the decade that followed, part of which he spent in Paris, to turn himself into an abstract artist. It was an extremely difficult period for him. He supported himself as a caseworker for the New York City Department of Social Services. For a time he turned his back on painting altogether and became a songwriter. He joined ASCAP, and one of his songs, "Seabreeze," recorded by Billy Eckstein, was a hit. Interestingly, he was encouraged by Hannah Arendt and her husband, the philosopher Heinrich Blücher, to persevere as a painter. But it is one thing to return to painting, another to know what kind of painting to return to. In the culture of the 1950s, abstraction seemed to be the only option for a serious painter, but Bearden ultimately realized that he was not cut out for it. There was accordingly no clear path before him. He was not alone in his frustrations, and though I cannot say that he and Philip Guston were part of one another's lives, they both went through the same sort of crisis. At a panel on the future of abstraction, held at the Museum of Modern Art in 1960, Guston said:

> There is something ridiculous and miserly in the myth we inherit from abstract art: that painting is autonomous, pure, and for itself—therefore we habitually analyze its ingredients and define its limits. But painting is "impure." It is the adjustment of "impurities" which forces its continuity. We are image-makers and image-ridden.

Guston's 1970 show at Marlborough made a radical break with the abstract painting in which, unlike Bearden, he had achieved considerable success. By then Bearden had found his way. Both derived their new language from vernacular imagery—Guston from the comics, Bearden from photographs in magazines like *Life* and *Ebony*. Bearden's liberation came through a medium that combined collage and photomontage. The deep biographical question, to which I have no answer, is how he found this medium and made it his own.

When Bearden turned his back on art and became a songwriter in the 1950s, Hannah Arendt urged him to persevere as a painter.

Consider, for example, his 1964 work *Evening*. It is a scene of three black figures—two men and a woman—enjoying a game of cards under lamplight. It is 9:10, according to the clock in the lower right corner, which Bearden had cut and pasted from a magazine. Someone is snoozing on the daybed, which has a broken spring. The card players' heads have been cut and pieced together from magazine photographs, as have the cards they are playing with. So has the woman's dress, as well as the buildings we see through a window in the upper left. The table has the feeling of a Cubist still life. There is a banjo in the lower left corner. It is a small, dense work, and signature Bearden. What is striking about it is the way the two sides of his work intersect and overlap—his commitment to depicting the "Negro experience" and his great knowledge of modern art. This overlap defines his work from this point on, a powerful outpouring of creative energy in which Bearden produced masterpiece after masterpiece. It is positively thrilling to experience this in the second room of the show.

Look at the wonderful *Watching the Good Trains Go By*. A group of black figures are lined up as a train approaches from the right. Their faces and garments are collaged from scraps scissored from magazines. A figure in a cloth cap plays a guitar. If *Evening* refers to Bearden's Harlem experience, *Watching the Good Trains Go By* perhaps refers to North Carolina, where he was born and spent parts of his youth. It is a rural scene, with barns and paper hills. The train is a recurring symbol in Bearden's art, perhaps because it was a central symbol of the black migration, carrying people between North and South, city and country, as in August Wilson's great play *The Piano Lesson*, whose title is drawn from one of Bearden's paintings. Bearden's father was a railroad man, like the character Doaker in Wilson's play, who articulates the meaning of trains in black American mythology—"Now, I'll tell you something about the railroad..." There is a train in the background of *Prevalence of Ritual: Tidings*, which is an Annunciation, with a scary angel, looking like a tribal fetish, next to a demure young black woman with downcast eyes, cut from a magazine. One wonders if the train is Bearden's way of showing the Holy Spirit.

Photomontage flourished in the German Dada movement of the early 1920s, where it became a powerful vehicle for political commentary. I suspect that Bearden learned about it through the German refugee artist George Grosz, with whom he studied at the Art Students League in the 1930s. Grosz had exhibited in the 1921 Dada Exhibition in Berlin, along with the great montagists Hannah Höch and John Heartfield. Bearden's ambitious montage, *Sermons: The Walls of Jericho*, uses photographs of Benin heads, together with fragments of Roman architecture, to convey a feeling of walls tumbling down. Of his 1964 works, it is closest, I think, to Hannah Hoch's angry 1920 masterpiece, *Cut With the Kitchen Knife Dada Through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch of Germany*, in which cut-out newspaper images of German political figures and entertainers are pasted together with machine parts and headlines to form a sour indictment of Hoch's times. Bearden is almost never polemical in this manner. *Sermons*—reproduced in the catalogue but not included in the present venue—is atypical. For the most part, his imagery is amused and affectionate. These are the people, these are the forms of life, he loved.

Interspersed with the photomontages in the second room are larger photostats of the same works, which Bearden called "Projections." It was these that first caught the eye of the gallerist Arne Ekstrom, who presented the first show of his new work. So far as I can tell, it consisted of twenty-one

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photostatic enlargements of his montages, which I find somewhat baffling. The photostats are monochrome, of course, and the figures seem to float in a kind of brown twilight. I don't know if the montages existed for the sake of the photostats, which have an entirely different aesthetic. Seeing a photostat next to its corresponding montage feels like an allegory of Walter Benjamin's juxtaposition of the art of mechanical reproduction alongside an artwork with aura. I don't think the role of photostat was documentary, as a wall text somewhat lamely suggests, but what Bearden was getting at remains an unsolved issue in interpreting his work. In any case, the "Projections" seem to drop out of the picture after 1964. In my judgment they lack the charm and energy of the montage/collages they reproduce.

Near the end of the show there is a wonderful 1981 self-portrait—the only one Bearden is known to have done—that shows the artist on one side of a framed painting on an easel, with a black model, her back to us, standing on the other side. It is called *Profile/Part II, The Thirties: Artist With Painting and Model*. It is a kind of history of his development as an artist. The painting on the easel is a version in bright, clear colors, of an early painting, *The Visitation*, which you can see, in far muddier colors, near the beginning of the show. Not only have Bearden's forms become more clarified and his colors more intense in this 1981 reworking of a 1941 painting, but *Profile* uses cut paper as the studio floor covering: a plaid rug for the model to stand on, and a neatly cut piece of gift wrapping for the rest. There is a drawing of the model on the floor, and a cup of brushes on the left—in the 1930s, Bearden had not yet discovered cut paper as medium. The model is wearing a piece of African textile around her middle, which is painted rather than collaged, as are the painter's own garments. Bearden has not given himself much by way of facial features; it's as if he were saying that his work *is* his portrait. On the wall behind him is a reproduction of a work by Duccio, part of his great *Maestà*, which Bearden had closely studied. I suspect the Duccio gives the work its title—it refers to the time when Bearden was studying the old masters, under the guidance of Grosz.

There is a superb essay on Bearden by Mary Schmidt Campbell in the catalogue for his 1991 memorial show (he died in 1988) at the Studio Museum in Harlem, "Memory and Metaphor." In it she asks an interesting question: "What is Bearden's role in the history of American art? Will Ro-

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mare Bearden appear to be an anachronism in American art, his new forms an aberration, exotic and interesting, but ultimately not part of the central story of the art of the [twentieth] century?" I would like to address this question here. I don't think Bearden shaped the direction art took in the 1960s; we cannot imagine the 1960s without Warhol, but we can without Bearden. It was the 1960s that made him possible, rather than the reverse. And yet Bearden was among the great beneficiaries of the period, and ultimately became an innovator in his own right. He was able to make art out of his own reality, and to find, in the history of Modernism, the formal means of doing this. Through this, he became a paradigm of what happened to art history through the 1960s and into the present. He turned his life into art, using what he had learned from Duccio, Giotto and Dada, as well as from Benin and Baoulé. But the art he created is for everyone. I think that is the kind of achievement artists today aspire to. ■

What Bearden Taught Me: An Interview With Branford Marsalis

Last year, the saxophonist Branford Marsalis made a record titled Romare Bearden Revealed *(Rounder Records), to accompany the Bearden retrospective that opened at the National Gallery in Washington, DC, and that is now on view at the Whitney Museum in New York. Performing with his quartet and joined by guests including his brother, the trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, and the pianist Harry Connick Jr., Branford paid tribute to Bearden's extraordinary collages of blues and jazz musicians by arranging songs that had inspired the artist.* The Nation *recently spoke to Marsalis about his relationship to Bearden, whom he befriended in the 1980s.*

—Adam Shatz

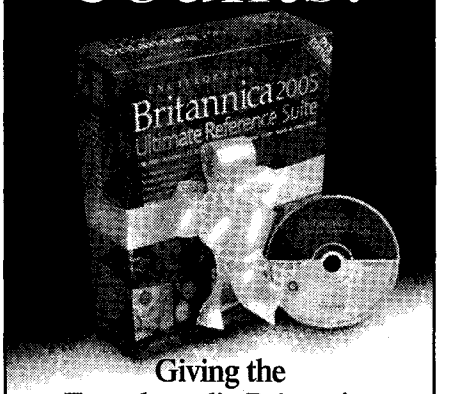
How did you end up making a record honoring Bearden?

Robert O'Mealy [a member of the board of directors of the Romare Bearden Foundation and the Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English at Columbia University] approached me to make a record as an accompaniment to the show. I was like, hell no, I'm going to have my first vacation in five years. Then Bob O'Mealy sent me the pictures of the entire exhibit in miniature, while I was on tour with my band. When we saw those pictures we knew we had to do it. Tain [Jeff "Tain" Watts, Marsalis's longtime drummer] said, "Come on, man, do the record!" I had three weeks to write the arrangements. Bob compiled for me a list of pictures that had titles from jazz songs, most of them from the swing era. Romare was completely modern, but he understood that the modern comes through, not at the expense of, tradition. And other than Wynton's composition "J Mood," Bearden didn't have any paintings named after modern songs, so we focused on the traditional stuff.

It's interesting that Bearden, despite his own modernism, didn't name any of his collages after music from the bebop period, much less free jazz.

Bearden understood that the traditional culture is the gateway to the modern ideal. It's amazing how many people can't hear that or figure it out. It's because he was such a traditionalist that he wasn't shocked when he heard Ornette Coleman. For some critics like Albert Murray, blues and swing are defined by a specific sound, so they have difficulty hearing the blues in music that extends the form beyond the obvious. Romare could hear the blues tradition Ornette's music was coming out of because he approached the music more as a student. And Romare was a student above all. I think it was Rilke who said that one should always be at the point of beginning. Well, that was Romare. He was always living at the very beginning, and that was why he could live in utter anonymity, just doing his work; and it wasn't about fame or validation, it was all about the work. An interesting parallel would be with [the late pianist and Modern Jazz Quartet member] John Lewis, who very few would consider one of the mainstays of free jazz, and yet it was John Lewis who encouraged the Erteguns [the brothers

It's the gift of thought that counts.



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Ahmet and Nesuhi Ertegun, the heads of Atlantic Records in its glory days] to sign Ornette. He was the last person you'd expect to do that, but he understood that Ornette and Coltrane were extending the blues form.

What is it about Bearden's work that you connect to most as a musician and composer?

There's a phrase a friend of mine uses when he teaches his students, and it's the importance of process over product. When we live in a situation where artists are eternally struggling to balance their artistic desires with the limited taste of the public, Romare just did his thing. And it's not insignificant in a spiritual sense that before I was approached to do this record, I saw a Marc Chagall exhibit at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. I was knocked out by the way they set up the show, because you could see his progression from being a classical painter to his interest in Picasso's ideas, to his adoption of Gauguin, and I was struck by the way he put his work together through these borrowings. When I saw Bearden's work I saw the same thing, someone who was more interested in the process than in the product.

Is that why Bearden's work is so widely loved by jazz musicians?

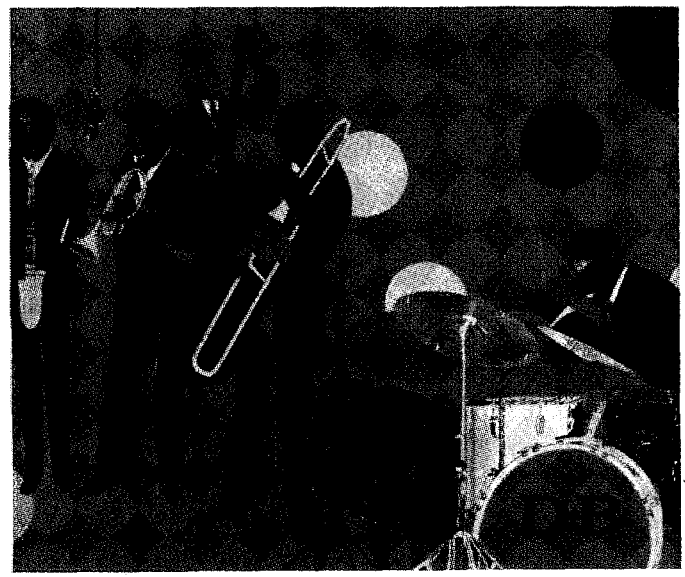
In all fairness, I think a lot of jazz musicians admire him because he was into jazz, he was black and the paintings are hip. In order to say you like Bearden's work you need to know something about art, and I openly admit that when I first met Bearden I didn't know shit about painting. My wife at the time was friends with a couple who owned an art gallery and they were basically giving away paintings by Bearden for $2,500. The deal was that if you bought one you got to meet the artist. My ex-wife said you should invest and get a Bearden. I told my dad that if I bought the painting I could meet Bearden, and my dad said you better go meet that man. So I bought one and those were the best $2,500 I ever spent. My wife and I are divorced, and she has the painting. But I got to meet Bearden, and it opened up a new door for me. He taught me how to look at art.

What were your impressions of him as a person?

He was a very quiet man, with a smile on his face all the time. And he was obviously quite voyeuristic. You could always see him watching. When I first met him I was knocked out by how insanely curious he was, and how he could talk more intelligently about music than most musicians. He furthered my quest to slowly and deliberately develop my musical and even my personal identity.

What does Bearden's work have in common with jazz, in aesthetic terms?

His use of collage, which is a kind of improvisation. The collages, especially the late ones, are so fluid. You don't get the sense he spent two years on one painting. He'd put some things down and look at them and then build on them. Collage was meant for him. I especially love *The Apprenticeship of Jelly Roll Morton*, a collage painting of a man playing in front of a naked woman, because Jelly Roll used to play in all the brothels in New Orleans—it's funny and it's beautiful.



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***Thank You...For F.U.M.L. (Funking Up My Life)* (1978)**

And then there is Bearden's interest in black life. He came from Charlotte, and he was part of the black migration from South to North. And even though he was from North Carolina, I get the sense that he was more into the Mississippi Delta blues—you know, Sonny Boy Williamson, Robert Johnson, Lightnin' Hopkins—than the Piedmont Sound, the Carolina-Virginia sound, which is less of a slide sound and more of a picked sound.

Is there something musical about his use of color that has echoes in the use of timbre?

I don't know if it's musical. It's obvious that the black Americans are the descendants of Africans, and Africans wear very colorful clothing. Now, because I am very successfully colonized, I can't go around wearing no yellow suit. There was a time when I came to New York and I was less colonized and I could wear a blue suit and red shoes, but if you understand culturally the role that color plays in African society, Romare's colors make perfect sense. They express a relationship to a culture, and Romare naturally understood that.

If you had to compare Bearden's work to that of a jazz composer, who would it be? Ellington? Monk? Mingus?

It would have to be Duke. Monk's compositions were brilliant, and Mingus's were too, but that was mainly the group interplay, which is why his compositions don't usually come off when they're covered by other musicians. But Duke had such a worldview. Monk had a worldview too, and when you listen from song to song, the melodies are genius. But when you listen to Duke, the stuff he wrote in the 1920s was so different from what he wrote in the '40s and from he wrote in the '50s, and that's what he shares with Romare, that emphasis on process over product.

One of the things that strikes me about Bearden's work is that even when he's depicting people who live in difficult conditions, there's nothing bleak or fatalistic about his vision. It's very affirmative of the African-American experience in all its rich diversity, alternately sorrowful and joyful. Do you see a connection here with black American music?

I think that's life in general. In the last five or ten years I've gravitated more to German classical music more than anything else, because composers like Brahms and Mahler have been able to illuminate the beauty of melancholy, even when they're writing in a major key. And Mahler has the double whammy of being Jewish, and Jewish music also has that beautiful sense of melancholy. It was only when I heard Uri Caine's Mahler record [*Urlicht/Primal Light*] that I realized how uniquely Jewish Mahler's music is. Even Wagner's crazy ass has that same thing, and there's Schubert and Schumann—particularly the *lieder*, simple melodies that are so melancholic and so beautiful. What the German composers and philosophers understood—and what Bearden also understood—is that one cannot be a complete human being without embracing the melancholy in oneself. Bearden

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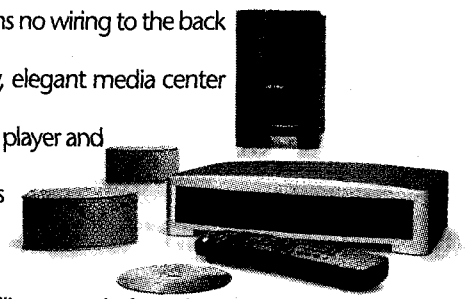

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had some rough times. He had a nervous breakdown, he stopped painting and started writing songs. He had a crisis of conscience. And then he got on the other side of it and said *this is what I am.*

Albert Murray said Bearden's work was the visual equivalent of the blues. Do you agree?

I don't think so. Bearden's paintings are the visual equivalent of a combination of things, and once you start talking about Bearden's work being the equivalent of the blues you start pigeonholing him as a black painter, and I don't accept that. When I first saw the show at the National Gallery, a woman came up to me and said, "Don't you think it's time the National Gallery gave some space to black artists? Isn't this overdue?" And I said no, because this show isn't about Bearden's blackness, which I find ironic in the first place because he was damned near white in his appearance, although he wasn't in his persona. Bearden belongs here because of his work as an artist. This is not the National Gallery's version of affirmative action. He was a student of painting, period. He wasn't just a Negro historian, he was a student of the world. And so the blues was captured in his work, but so was the experience of European art. He was a polyglot and absorbed everything around him and didn't limit himself, and that makes him exceptional in a world that too often prizes limitation. ■

Suspension of Disbelief

ERIC FONER

PERILOUS TIMES: Free Speech in Wartime From the Sedition Act of 1798 to the War on Terrorism. By Geoffrey R. Stone. Norton. 730 pp. $35.

Ask Americans to enumerate their civil liberties and they instinctively turn to freedom of speech and the press. Many assume that these freedoms have been enjoyed more or less continuously since 1791, when the Bill of Rights was ratified. In fact, for much of our history numerous legal and extralegal obstacles have confronted dissenters hoping to publicize their views, hold meetings, picket and distribute literature. Consciousness of the importance of free speech developed gradually and unevenly. In *Perilous Times*, Geoffrey R. Stone offers a compelling account of a crucial part—but only a part—of this checkered history.

Stone's focus is free speech in wartime, and it is not a happy story. Time and again, war has led to serious restrictions on civil liberties. The book examines six historical moments during which the government has tried to punish individuals for their beliefs—the "quasi-war" with France of the late 1790s; the Civil War; World War I; World War II; the cold war; and Vietnam. For each episode, Stone sketches the cast of characters involved in free-speech cases and provides detailed examination of debates over the proper limits of civil liberties in wartime. A professor at the University of Chicago Law School, Stone makes his sympathies clear at the outset: "dissent in wartime can be the highest form of patriotism." Governments, unfortunately, rarely see it that way.

Each of Stone's episodes bears lessons for the present. He begins in 1798, when the Administration of John Adams, faced with the threat of war with France and a growing Jeffersonian opposition at home, moved to silence political dissent. The Alien Act allowed the President to deport foreigners he deemed dangerous. The Sedition Act essentially made it illegal to criticize the government. Most of the seventeen people indicted under its provisions were Jeffersonian editors, including Matthew Lyon, a Vermont Congressman who published the *Scourge of Aristocracy and Repository of Important Political Truths*. Lyon received a $1,000 fine and a four-month jail sentence.

Unlike the recent USA Patriot Act, the Sedition Act was actually read and debated in Congress. Federalists, drawing on an old tradition of English law that defined "prior restraint" as the greatest threat to a free press, insisted that since the act eschewed pre-publication censorship and allowed truth as a defense, it did not violate the First Amendment. Jeffersonians insisted that for the government to punish the expression of ideas endangered democracy. Jefferson's election in 1800 put a stop for more than a century to federal legislation against political dissent.

Stone then jumps to the Civil War, offering a careful examination of President Lincoln's arguments for suspending the writ of habeas corpus and allowing military tribunals to try civilians outside war zones. He notes the damage to civil liberties but makes clear that Lincoln took pains to mitigate the excessive actions of subordinates. Not all of his successors were so scrupulous.

During World War I Woodrow Wilson, as assured of the righteousness of his crusade to remake the world as any member of the Bush Administration, insisted that people he deemed disloyal had "sacrificed their right to civil liberties." Stone points out that when Congress passed the Espionage Act of 1917, the first national law to punish political speech since 1798, it rejected some of Wilson's extreme proposals, including a provision authorizing the government to censor the press and punish "disaffection." But by 1918, when Congress passed the Sedition Act, such caution had evaporated. That law forbade writing or making any statement that brought the government into "disrepute."

The arrest of numerous Americans for speeches and publications critical of the war effort forced the Supreme Court for the first time to deal with free-speech issues. In its initial decisions, Stone relates, it dealt the concept of civil liberties a devastating blow. In 1919 it upheld the convictions of Charles Schenck, who distributed leaflets urging political action against the draft, and of Eugene Debs for a speech condemning American involvement in the war. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes declared that the First Amendment did not prevent Congress from prohibiting speech that presented a "clear and present danger" of inspiring illegal actions.

During World War II, the Administration of Franklin Roosevelt actively promoted freedom of expression as one of the key differences between American liberty and Nazi tyranny. Freedom of speech took its place as one of the Four Freedoms Roosevelt promised to extend to the entire world after the war. The Supreme Court, Stone writes, "played a cautiously speech-protective role," overturning, for example, the conviction of Jehovah's Witnesses who refused to salute the American flag. (Of course, it also upheld the internment of more than 100,000 Japanese-Americans, the greatest violation of civil liberties in American history other than slavery.)

Eric Foner, a member of the Nation *editorial board, is the DeWitt Clinton Professor of History at Columbia University. His survey textbook,* Give Me Liberty! An American History, *has just been published by Norton.*

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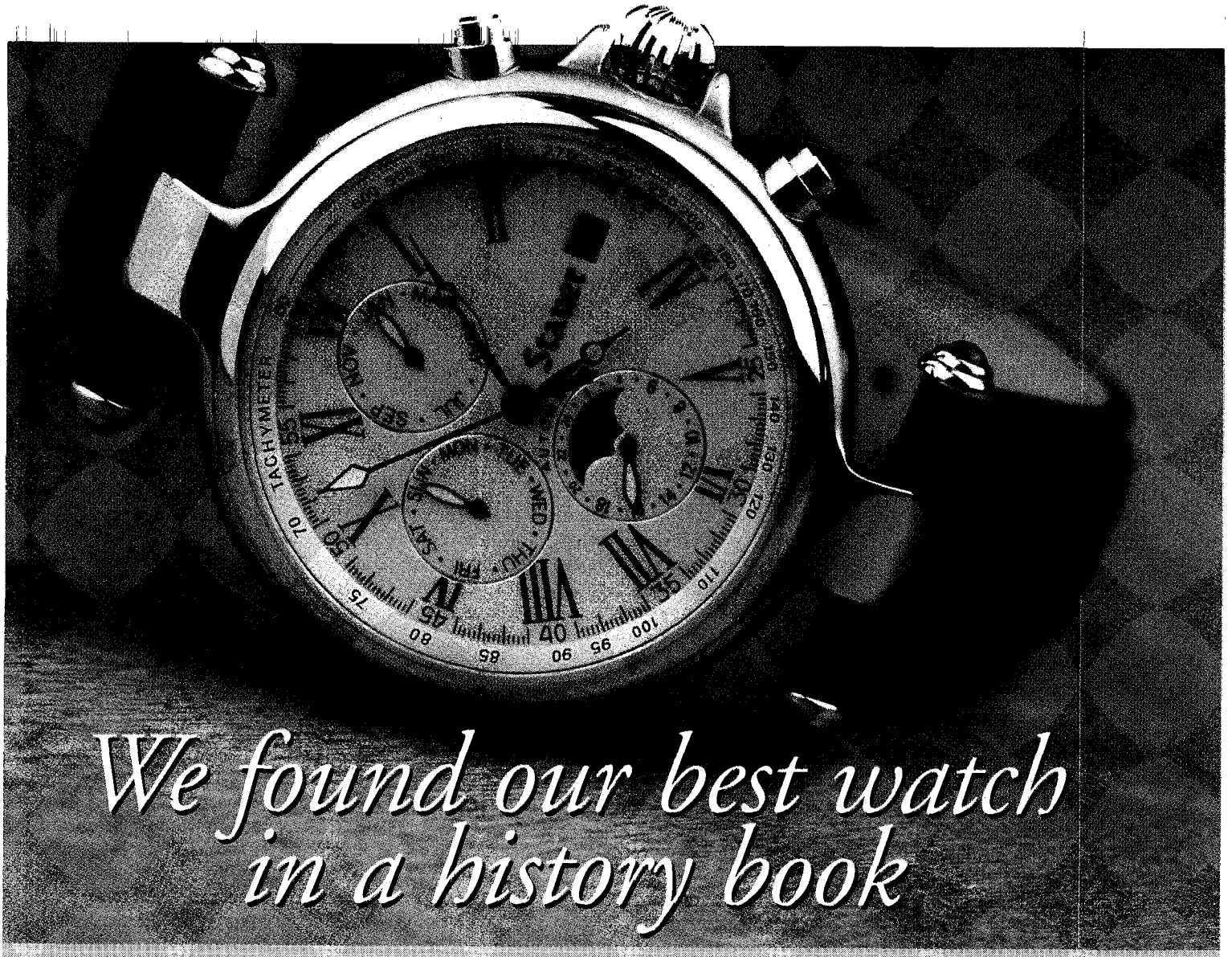

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The progress of free expression proved tentative and partial. The postwar years witnessed a "steady erosion" of support for civil liberties. Stone strongly criticizes President Harry Truman for establishing a series of tribunals at which government employees were asked to respond to ill-defined charges of disloyalty (which often included union activism and support for civil rights) by unnamed informants. Truman hoped the program would insulate him from Republican criticism. But, writes Stone, his actions "laid the foundation" for the ensuing "anti-Communist hysteria."

At first, in the words of Justice William O. Douglas, the Supreme Court ran "with the hounds," affirming the conviction of Eugene Dennis and other Communist leaders for the vaguely defined charge of "conspiring to advocate the overthrow of government." Stone's analysis of the Dennis case underscores the dangers that exist when judges succumb to the temper of the times or defer unquestioningly to the President's judgment as to whether a threat to national security actually exists. Not until 1957, after the Senate had censured Joe McCarthy, did the Supreme Court put an end to the prosecution of Communists, and it soon went on to eviscerate federal and state loyalty programs.

During the Vietnam War, the last of Stone's episodes, the Court demonstrated how far it had traveled from World War I. In 1968 it did uphold the conviction of a war protester for burning his draft card, rejecting the claim that this action should be considered symbolic speech. But in the Pentagon Papers case it allowed the publication of classified government documents whose release was certain to affect the war effort—quite a change from the World War I jailing of dissenters who circulated innocuous anti-war leaflets. Government efforts against dissent hardly ceased, but apart from a few unsuccessful conspiracy indictments, they now took the form of FBI disruption of anti-war and civil rights groups rather than the prosecution of dissenters.

Overall, *Perilous Times* tells a story every American should know, and tells it well. It provides an almost encyclopedic account of the evolution of legal doctrine concerning dissent, and perhaps the best available analysis of the legal questions relating to free speech in wartime. Why, then, did I experience a growing feeling of unease as I read through the volume? The reason lies in Stone's myopic definition both of free speech and the threats to it.

Perilous Times reflects the strengths and limitations of a certain kind of law school history—a history that revolves around federal laws and constitutional cases, and whose heroes are jurists and lawyers. Stone's understanding of free speech flows from the First Amendment, which defends our civil liberties against violations by Congress (subsequently interpreted by the courts to include all agencies of government). The amendment does not prohibit the suppression of free speech by private individuals and institutions, and thus Stone devotes little attention to the way non-governmental actors have affected freedom of expression. Employers can fire people because of their political beliefs, and consolidated media can decide what views do not deserve to be printed, without violating the First Amendment.

Stone's focus on the federal government overlooks the threats to free speech that have come from local authorities and private groups.

This focus on repression by government explains why Stone chose to study free speech only during wars. In peacetime, which, according to his calculation, represents 80 percent of our history, "the United States does not punish individuals for challenging government policies." Stone's account leaves the impression that respect for freedom of expression is the "default" position of American society, upset from time to time by war hysteria. History does not bear this out.

A broader view of the subject would include the numerous violations that have occurred in peacetime, sometimes by the federal, state and local governments, often by private parties. Stone, for example, states that between 1800 and the Civil War, the federal government "did not attempt to silence criticism of national leaders or policies"—ignoring the fact that state-level prosecutions for seditious libel continued long after the national Sedition Act expired in 1801. Even on its own terms, the statement is factually incorrect. In the 1830s the House of Representatives' "gag rule" prohibited the consideration of antislavery petitions, and the Administration of Andrew Jackson allowed Southern mobs to remove abolitionist materials from the mails. Indeed, Stone's formulation ignores the centrality of the slavery controversy to the growth of civil liberties. In response to the disruption of their meetings and the killing of an abolitionist editor, critics of slavery elevated freedom of expression to a central place in the definition of American liberty. Even though their campaign occurred in peacetime, it forms an essential part of the history of free speech.

Similarly, in the twentieth century grave threats to freedom of speech have come from local governments and private groups, and "normal" times have seen their share of repression. While Stone mentions the depredations of organizations like the American Protective League, which rounded up suspected draft dodgers during World War I, and the widespread blacklisting by employers during the McCarthy period, he devotes little attention to their actions since they did not raise a constitutional question. He deals with Japanese internment but says nothing about other ways racism has affected the suppression of free speech, including the lynching of blacks who spoke out against the South's racial order, and numerous state and local efforts to suppress the NAACP.

Stone highlights the bravery of federal judges Charles Amidon, George Bourquin and Learned Hand, who challenged the hysteria of World War I by dismissing indictments of war critics. But equally heroic battlers for free speech go unmentioned—anarchists who combated state "criminal syndicalism" laws; the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), which campaigned against local ordinances that limited public speaking; birth-control advocates who fought for the right to distribute information about reproduction and contraception in the face of national and local obscenity laws; immigrants who resisted state laws that prohibited teaching in a language other than English.

Most of these struggles never got to the Supreme Court, so they do not form part of the history of constitutional law. But they helped to shape a civil liberties consciousness that eventually influenced Congressional policies and Court decisions. For example, the exposure during the 1930s of the violent methods used by employers to combat unionization played a crucial role in making the federal government for the first time a protector of freedom of expression. With its restrictions on employers' antiunion activities, the Wagner Act of 1935 was, among other things, a landmark in the development of free speech.

Many readers will be disappointed that Stone devotes only a handful of pages to the free-speech implications of the "war on terrorism." But he makes it clear that the lessons of history are not encouraging.

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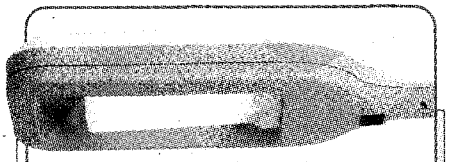

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"The United States," he writes, "has a long and unfortunate history of overreacting to the dangers of wartime." American political leaders have frequently blurred the line between treason and dissent, raised the specter of internal subversion and inflamed public fears for partisan purposes.

The history of free expression—in peacetime as well as war—underscores the fragility of civil liberties in the face of assertive patriotism. Not long after the attacks of September 11, the journalist Jay Winik argued in the *Wall Street Journal* that since restraints on civil liberties in earlier wars had no lasting effect, we should not be concerned about parallel actions today—"when our nation is again secure, so too will be our principles." Stone's account offers a powerful rebuke to such complacency. The episodes he relates did indeed have enduring consequences. World War I repression destroyed the IWW, the Socialist Party and much of the mainstream labor movement. McCarthyism dealt a severe blow to all sorts of movements for social change and severely limited the acceptable boundaries of political criticism among intellectuals.

Given that the "craving for security at any price" has more than once led to public acquiescence in restraints on civil liberties, Stone insists on the necessity of having in government people with a commitment to civil liberties. No such person exists in the Bush Administration. ■

Prisoner of Love

BRUCE ROBBINS

ORWELL: The Life. By D.J. Taylor. Holt. 466 pp. Paper $17.

THE BETRAYAL OF DISSENT: Beyond Orwell, Hitchens and the New American Century. By Scott Lucas. Pluto. 324 pp. Paper $19.95.

I was introduced to Bernard-Henri Lévy this spring at a stop on his latest book tour. It was a few minutes before he was due to face the audience. After a polite hello, he turned to the organizer of the event and asked, "How many people in the hall?" The organizer named a respectable figure. Lévy responded with a menacing glare: "Why so few? Your explanation?" This jaw-dropping exchange reminded me of the first lines of Lévy's book on French intellectuals: "The scene opens in Paris, at the beginning of the eighties, with the funeral cortège of a famous person—but whose?" By making us guess—Sartre? Foucault?—Lévy seemed to be saying that the occupant of the hearse could be anyone; what's important is the size of the crowd. Imagine—all these people gathered to pay their respects to... a thinker! How cool to be gawked at. How cool to be an intellectual, even a dead one.

George Orwell had a quiet funeral, on a frigid January day in an unheated London church. Faithful to his subject's modesty, D.J. Taylor does not tell us how large the congregation was. Orwell too had become famous, but only when he was dying and unable to enjoy it. Once he was gone, the sufferings to which he had exposed himself on his expeditions among the poor and while fighting fascism in Spain crystallized, under the pressure of the cold war, into a sort of secular, antitotalitarian sainthood. But his conspicuous saintliness has also invited more cynical interpretations. Scott Lucas's is one of these. Lucas reminds us that this "defender of free thought and clear prose" and "foe of Big Brother" metamorphosed during World War II into an English patriot who, upon request, submitted an annotated list of leftist sympathizers to British intelligence. Lucas's Orwell is too intent on acting the role of the heroically unaffiliated individual to keep faith with the common people or with socialism. Lucas can't quite bring himself to say that Orwell's withdrawal from leftist politics was a clever career move. But he comes close.

Much of this has already been argued by Orwell's earlier critics. The novelty of *The Betrayal of Dissent* lies in Lucas's enlargement of the accusation to take in Christopher Hitchens and other erstwhile left-wing supporters of the "war on terror." Hitchens, former *Nation* columnist and author of *Why Orwell Matters*, has repeatedly claimed Orwell's mantle. Lucas has no objection. Both Orwell and Hitchens, he says, repudiated their affiliations with the left amid the nationalist fervor of World War II and post-9/11 and threw in their lot with an arrogant empire. Each was finally less interested in changing the world than in playing solitary hero before a star-struck audience. Hitchens's "master-stroke," Lucas says, is an imitation of Orwell's: seizing for himself "the role of the honourable loner."

There is a certain logic here. And this logic may have something to do with the dynamics of media dependency, disguised as the vaunted "independence" of intellectuals like Hitchens and Lévy. Anyone who claims freedom from all parties except the party of the intelligent, while displaying his social access to the most exclusive parties, will seem to the envious outsider as if he has taken secret membership in the party of the party-givers. And his intellectual performance will seem like the paid work of keeping the guests entertained. But Lucas is too angry at Hitchens to leave it at that. In a series of hapless attempts at a devastating put-down, he arranges for his opponent to bleat, bellow and imitate other barnyard noises. It's one thing to disagree about Iraq or to catch Hitchens in the blustery pretense that he is and always has been right, for example over the intervention in Kosovo (against, then for, and always have been for) or the weapons of mass destruction ("You can still meet people...who don't think that Iraq has any genocidal weapons"). But it's obtuse to accuse him of changing his position as events developed. Anyone who writes to a deadline is going to have to shift his ground somewhat (although Hitchens recently did so with record-breaking velocity by endorsing Bush in these pages one week, and appearing to endorse Kerry in *Slate* the following week). Lucas himself doesn't budge an inch. He doesn't inquire into possible reasons, except in the case of Orwell, that fewer and fewer intellectuals identify themselves as socialists. Nor does he update his cold war term "dissent" to suit an era when every SUV owner considers himself a maverick. You can't accuse Hitchens of being "unable or unwilling to deal with complexities" unless you're prepared to deal with a few yourself.

In the renewed cold war polemics over Orwell and his "list," what's been lost sight of is how well he dealt with the complexities of his time—in particular, the delicate balance between divisive domestic radicalism, national unity in the face of fascism and long-term internationalism—and what a bracing antidote to cynicism he remains as we try to face our own post–cold war complexities.

Bruce Robbins, a professor of English at Columbia University, is the author, among other books, of Feeling Global: Internationalism in Distress *(NYU).*

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It's true, as Taylor demonstrates in his readable and fair-minded biography, that Orwell did not always tell the truth. Deliberately merging his life with his writing, he blurs the edges of both. When he experiments with his capacity to endure extreme discomfort, he tends to leave out the people he could and did fall back on. Like *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s Ministry of Truth, he sometimes changes the historical record, for instance. To watch this revisionism as it happens, consult Raymond Williams's *George Orwell*, which compares *The Road to Wigan Pier*, Orwell's brilliant report on northern miners during the Depression, with the diaries Orwell kept while researching it. The figure of "Orwell" as a fearlessly independent explorer and truth-teller was carefully constructed, Williams shows, by the excision of various people who showed him where to look—for example, the union activists who took him around the mines and explained to him what he had "discovered," only to be left out of Orwell's account. Taylor, who is more interested in Orwell's Eton connections than in his socialist comrades, notes that both networks of loyal friends tend to disappear from the published account. But Taylor treats Orwell's fictionalizing of his heroic self-image gently, as a writer's prerogative, and this seems right.

Orwell's fame certainly owes as much to his writerly flair as to his critique of the left. Since the end of the cold war we have had a chance to recognize that the classics *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are richly ambiguous masterpieces, intended to hit a variety of targets and produce a variety of effects, not to be dragooned into service as simple warnings against Soviet-style totalitarianism. (Who doesn't hear Orwellian doublethink when told by the Bush Administration that war is peace and occupation is liberation?) There is a cold war liberal in Orwell, of course, but that is not all there is. As Taylor argues, Orwell's achievement emerges directly from his painful internal contradictions. If he became, as is often said, the conscience of his age, it is only because he struggled long and hard against his inherited and temperamental conservatism, overcoming Tory prejudices and, as he said in another context, abolishing a part of himself.

It's true that Orwell was in the habit of speaking contemptuously about groups for which he had enthusiastically volunteered, like the Imperial Police in Burma (where he served for five years), artistic exiles in Paris or, later, the intellectuals in Britain. (He did not, however, speak with contempt about POUM, the party for which he took a bullet in the neck in Spain, or about democratic socialists at home.) This self-castigating habit has been held up by his liberal admirers as a model of intellectual honesty. What higher claim to credibility than a willingness to dissent from your own side? It might equally be seen as self-loathing, a personality trait to which Orwell's biographers fully attest. Hitchens recalls that the family meal ticket was Orwell's father's employment in "the degrading opium trade between British India and China." "Orwell may or may not have felt guilty about the source of his family's income—an image that recurs in his famous portrait of England itself as a family with a conspiracy of silence about its finances—but he undoubtedly came to see the exploitation of the colonies as the dirty secret of the whole enlightened British establishment." If self-loathing fed into Orwell's hostility toward his fellow intellectuals—they are in the position, Orwell said, "of a young man living on an allowance from a father whom he hates"—it also informs his socialism and his anti-imperialism.

Invoking Orwell in October 2002, Hitchens told the BBC: "I know what he would say about the grand question of the moment, which is, there's no comparison, that can or should be made, no moral equivalence, between the United States, whatever its shortcomings and the war of theocratic absolutism, which rejoices in the destruction of non-believers." Orwell's support for the war against Nazism was not, in fact, of this "no comparison" kind. Unlike Hitchens, he never thought that all you need to know, politically speaking, is that someone, somewhere, represents absolute evil. He never forgot how rational the idea of "moral equivalence" between the Nazis and the Western imperial powers looked to non-European victims of imperial domination and genocidal massacre. In order to achieve a global antifascist front, he repeated, Britain would have to commit not only to giving up its empire but to remedying the devastating inequality of resources to which the empire had contributed. In "Not Counting Niggers," he refused the "first duty of a 'good anti-Fascist,'" which was "to lie about" the disparity in income between England and India, a disparity so great that, as he put it, an Indian's leg is often thinner than an Englishman's arm. Orwell was trying to sustain divergent political commitments at the same time. He refused to let them settle into Hitchensian simplification.

When Bernard-Henri Lévy stages his rite at the tomb of the unknown intellectual, he whistles past the real and enduring mystery that brings out the crowds: Where does dissent come from? In Orwell's case, the answer is an unstable mixture of class confidence, adventurous empathy, self-hatred and love of clarity. For critics on the left, Orwell is one of those Establishment-bred radicals who ultimately gave up on their romance with the proletariat and reverted to type. In fact, Orwell never stopped thinking about the working class, but he learned to think about it differently. "The overwhelming bulk of the British proletariat," he wrote in 1936, "does not live in Britain but in Asia and Africa.... This is the system which we all live on." Note the "we all." Anticipating his line during World War II, he sees the nation as a unity transcending divisions of class. But it's not an antifascist unity of the decent. Here the nation is united in guilt, in common indecency. When he insisted that the British working class was not simply a victim of capitalism but also its beneficiary, Orwell was of course thinking like a member of the British upper middle class, whose guilt he thus spread around. But he was also carving out a proper space for British middle-class radicalism. And in so doing he was assuming a necessary political responsibility. Anyone interested in today's antisweatshop and antiwar movements, both of which have strong middle-class constituencies, will want to keep thinking with him.

This thinking isn't as easy as what usually counts as politics: Hitchens's Bushite renditions of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s Two Minutes Hate, or Lévy's vilification of Pakistan in *Who Killed Daniel Pearl?*, or even Michael Moore's demonization of Saudi Arabia in *Dude, Where's My Country?* and *Fahrenheit 9/11*. "One mightn't think it when one looks round the back streets of Sheffield," Orwell writes, "but the average British income is to the Indian as twelve to one. How can one get anti-Fascist and anti-capitalist solidarity in such circumstances?" What is this going to sound like in Sheffield? Politics begins here and now, and anyone who talks about distant suffering or struggles that are not on the current domestic agenda will inevitably be accused, as Orwell was, of political quietism. Yet for most of Orwell's career, the dismantling of the empire seemed as distant and inconceivable as the global redistribution of resources and the regulation of sweatshops sounds now. Naomi Klein and her friends in the movement for global justice have given Orwell a new political life. They make a more lasting and congenial contribution to his legacy than Hitchens and his. ■

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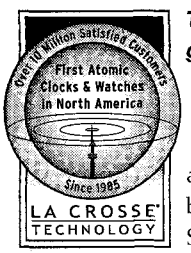

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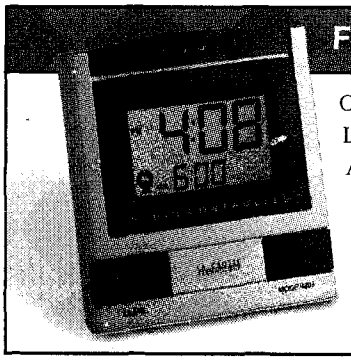

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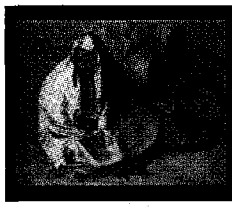

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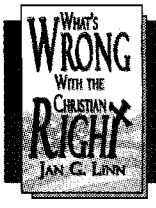

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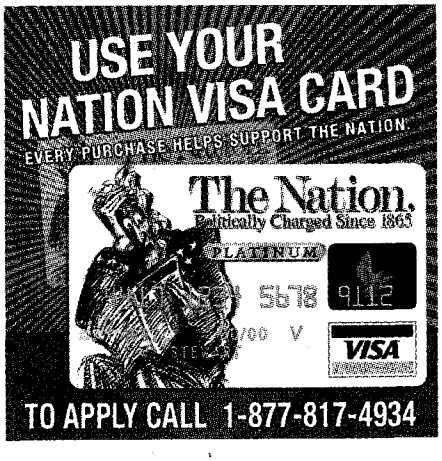

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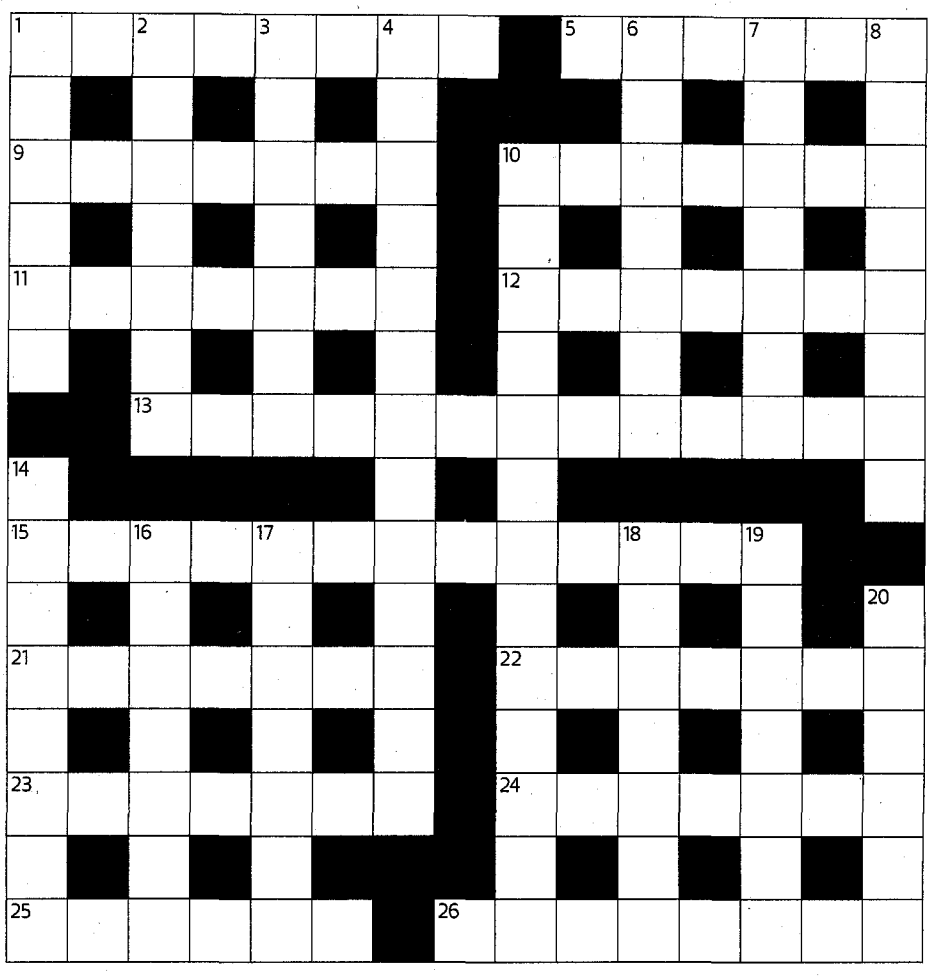

ACROSS

1 and **5** Ones wielding the lash on a person at rest would have to be the offensively presumptive type. (14)

9 The British evidently consider tearing up things lots of fun! (7)

10 Lively and cute, in a bad way to relate to something. (7)

11 The false step one German made turns out to be a shaper of form, like Jacob. (7)

12 How Fido makes a nuisance of himself proves the payback sounds tinny. (7)

13 The cake with strawberries might seem to be a small dessert, but soon pleasantly over. (5,3,5)

15 Like the worst fault-finder, with a lot of spin, which gets right censorious. (13)

21 Grasp the significance of something actual that is about the last letter written. (7)

22 What only Congress can do with the little devil, every individual must show. (7)

23 People in the audience sometimes call down this, where the leader has to be. (2,5)

24 No longer supine, but sort of supine about the redhead! (7)

25 and **28** Was one of them responsible for a ride to Dover—after fifty years, too! (6,8)

DOWN

1 and **14** Where to find a bunch of rabbits—difficult when the spirit around it makes a good start for the President. (6,1,7)

2 Takes advantage of the situation when I am getting lots of planned shots. (7)

3 Rip more letters to pieces, just to be *numero uno*? (7)

4 Because of the wild stream, getting angry on the mountain top with what you may pay to live there. (6,7)

6 A good support, so put it up when applicable. (7)

7 Sort of rap on the telephone, as they say—makes a Baroque pearl in New Orleans. (7)

8 What one shouldn't do with a red light on the entrance, being a fugitive. (8)

10 Giving a person his due, or just putting out, even unwillingly. (6,7)

14 See 1 down

16 Is the dramatic presentation not quite full of what might be considered kittenish? (7)

17 Rootlike stem, with a common factor has one when "Australia" comes up to Maine, shortly. (7)

18 What Superman wore—colored, of course—like the skipper did. (7)

19 To feel bad getting up is no rising of togetherness! (7)

20 What Tweety-Pie "things" might be beneath the standing of some people. (6)

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*Now at the lowest price ever of $49.95!**

A floor lamp that spreads sunshine all over a room and pays for itself!

The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp combines the benefits of natural daylight indoors with an energy savings of $51 over the life of one bulb!

Ever since the first human went into a dark cave and built a fire, people have realized the importance of proper indoor lighting. Unfortunately, since Edison invented the light bulb, lighting technology has remained relatively prehistoric. Modern light fixtures do little to combat many symptoms of improper lighting, such as eyestrain, dryness or burning. As more and more of us spend longer hours in front of a computer monitor, the results are compounded. And the effects of indoor lighting are not necessarily limited to physical well being. Many people believe that the quantity and quality of light can play a part in one's mood and work performance. Now, there's a better way to bring the positive benefits of natural sunlight indoors.

The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp will change the way you see and feel about your living or work spaces. Studies show that sunshine can lift your mood and your energy levels, but as we all know the sun, unfortunately, does not always shine. So to bring the benefits of natural daylight indoors, use the floor lamp that simulates the full spectrum of daylight. You will see with more clarity and enjoyment as this lamp provides sharp visibility for close tasks and reduces eyestrain.

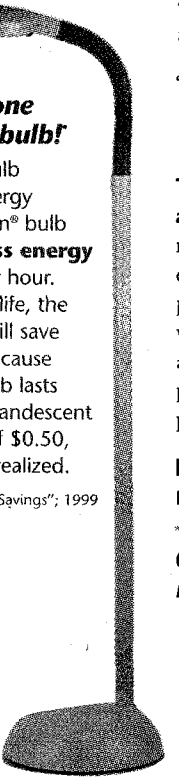
Its 27-watt compact bulb is the equivalent to a 150-watt ordinary light bulb. This makes it perfect for activities such as reading, writing, sewing, needlepoint, and especially for aging eyes.

We've looked at lots of lights, but this one offered the benefit of dual light levels of 27 and 18 watts of power equivalent to 150 and 100-watt incandescent bulbs. This lamp has a flexible gooseneck design for maximum efficiency, with an "Instant On" switch that is flicker-free. The high-tech electronics, user-friendly design, and bulb that lasts ten times longer than an ordinary bulb make this product a must-have.

SAVE $51 in energy cost over the life of one Balanced Spectrum® bulb!

A 150 watt incandescent bulb uses $0.013 per hour in energy cost. The Balanced Spectrum® bulb uses an average of **70% less energy** which saves you $0.009 per hour. Based on 5,000 hours bulb life, the Balanced Spectrum® bulb will save **$46** in energy cost. *Plus,* because the Balanced Spectrum® bulb lasts 10 times longer than an incandescent bulb priced at an average of $0.50, an additional **$5** savings is realized.

*Source: "Lighting the Way to Energy Savings"; 1999



Height as shown: 50"

"I sit in my comfortable chair after my husband has gone to bed, and I turn that lamp on. It makes it so nice because it's like daylight over my chair...I don't get sore eyes like I used to."

Grace A.
Margate, FL

Try the Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp now at it's lowest price of less than $50! Now more than ever is the time to add sunshine to every room in your house at this fantastic low price! The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp comes with a one-year manufacturer's limited warranty and *first*STREET's exclusive guarantee. Try this product for 90 days and return it for the product purchase price if not completely satisfied.

Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp
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Relaxation therapy for your feet

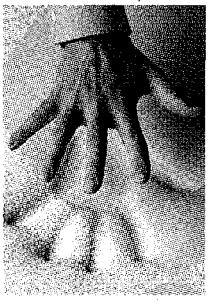
Visco-elastic foam has changed the way people sleep, now it helps the way you walk.

by Leigh Ligon

My feet hurt! How many times have you heard *or* said that...standing in line at the grocery store or simply while doing daily routine tasks? I feel like the older I get the more my feet ache. I've tried elevating my feet, soaking them in hot water and expensive massage therapy—but to no avail. That's why I'm so excited to tell you about my recent discovery—CLOUD 10 Slippers!

How did a NASA invention save my feet? From the moment I slipped them on, they molded to the shape of my feet like I had a custom fit pair of slippers made especially for me! The slipper's insole is made from visco-elastic memory foam originally created by NASA. This foam equalizes pressure, reduces stress and tension and provides incredible comfort.

According to the American Podiatric Medical Association, as people age, their feet tend to spread, and lose the fatty pads that cushion the bottom of the feet. Additional weight can affect the bone and ligament structure. These slippers mold to the contours of my feet through my body's heat and weight, literally cushioning every single step I take.



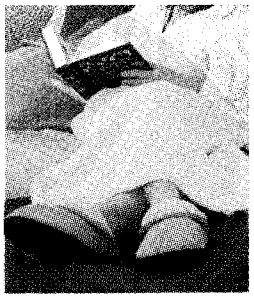
Technologically advanced slippers mold to the contours of your feet making each step feel like you're walking on Cloud 10!

Did you know that the average person takes 8,000 to 10,000 steps a day, which adds up to about 115,000 miles over a lifetime? That's enough to go around the circumference of the earth four times. No wonder we all have tired, aching feet.

I've heard about similar kinds of slippers, but I couldn't afford to spend nearly $70 a pair. The Cloud 10 Slippers were a much better fit for my budget. The outer material of these stylish slippers is beautiful tan faux suede and they feature a cozy, fleece-lined interior and collar to provide added warmth. The durable rubber sole is perfect for my quick trips outdoors to grab the morning paper.

❖ *Inner sole is constructed from visco-elastic memory foam*
❖ *Body heat molds foam to cushion feet for maximum support*
❖ *Super-soft, fleece lining provides added warmth*
❖ *Durable rubber sole—perfect for quick outdoor trips!*

If you have arthritic feet like I do, you suffer from inflammation and pain in your joints. Our feet have to last a lifetime and I've decided to stop neglecting the part of my body that keeps me mobile.



These slippers have a unisex design making them great for both men and women. I wear my Cloud 10 Slippers every chance I get and my feet have never felt so pampered.

Sink your feet into luxury. We are so confident that CLOUD 10 slippers will cushion your feet in complete comfort that we will offer you a no-questions asked in-home trial for 30 days. If you're not 100% completely satisfied just return them for a full refund of the purchase price.

Call now to take advantage of this limited offer.

Cloud 10 Slippers
Unisex design —Small, Medium or Large
***Small** (Women's 5-7)*
***Medium** (Women's 8-10 and Men's 7-9)*
***Large** (Men's 10-12)*

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